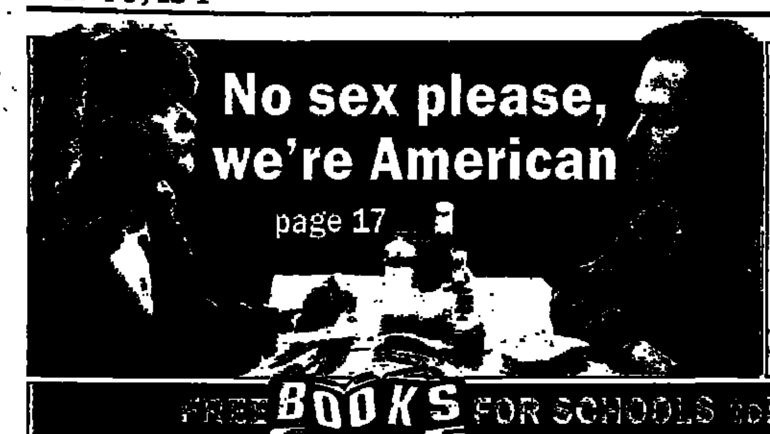
THE TIMES

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Economy heading towards brink of recession

By Janet Bush and Philip Webster

BRITAIN will move perilously close to recession over the next few months, the Bank of England admitted yesterday as it predicted that growth would be "close to zero" for the first half of this year.

Even after that, it expects growth to reach only 0.5 to 1 per cent for 1999 as a whole.

The predictions were coupled with a promise from the Bank to go on cutting interest rates as much as necessary, but the gloomy forecast prompted Tories to accuse the Government of driving the economy to the brink of recession.

Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, said that Labour's higher taxes, penalties for sav-



ers and reckless spending sprees had been disastrous. "Unless the Government use the Budget to rectify some of their blunders, Britain will pay the price in lost jobs and closed businesses."

And in the Commons, William Hague and Tony Blair clashed over the Government's economic record with the Tory leader claiming that Labour had added £260 to everyone's tax bill.

The Bank — like the Treasury — had previously looked for growth of around 1 per cent this year. But Mervyn King, the Bank's Deputy Governor, said that even though the forecast was now lower, the Bank's odds on recession were the same as they had been when its the last *Inflation Report* was published in November: one in four.

Lower interest rates would offset the slower growth, Mr King said, and he hinted strongly at further cuts. the Monetary Policy Committee — which last week reduced base rates for the fifth time in as many months — had not reached a "pause", he said, adding that without last week's half-point, the committee would have undershot the Government's 2.5 per cent target for underlying inflation.

Mr King explicitly admitted that some members of the MPC believe that the Bank's latest inflation forecasts were too high, which one economist said was "Bankspeak" for a disagreement on rates that suggested some members were pushing for a bigger cut last week.

Mr King acknowledged that the state of the world economy was, if anything, looking more hazardous now than it did late last year, citing in particular the deep uncertainty in Brazil after its devaluation. He also said the world appeared to be returning to a 1960s style era of low inflation, moving away from what he described as the abnormal inflationary decades of the 1970s and 1980s.

Although the Bank is more pessimistic about growth in the short-term, it is more optimistic than it was in November about the economy's ability to bounce back. The Bank is predicting that recovery will start from the middle of this year, with growth picking up sharply next year and in 2001.

The Confederation of British Industry showed little alarm at the new forecasts, arguing that the prospect of slower growth justified another half-point cut in rates. But the Conservatives will use the figures to step up their onslaught against the Government in the run-up to the Budget.

Yesterday Mr Hague accused the Prime Minister of "conveniently forgetting" his pre-election promises not to raise taxes. He urged Mr Blair to add together figures from the last two budgets. "They show that the total tax increase for this financial year... is £6,800 million which is £260 for every taxpayer in the country, in pension taxes, in petrol taxes, in mortgage taxes. He does not seem to be aware of it at all."

Mr Blair replied that under Labour the spending deficit had been slashed, employment was up and mortgage rates were at a 30-year low.

Peter Riddell, page 12

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PHILIPPE DESMAZES/REUTERS



Rescue workers searching wreckage of chalets in the hamlet of Le Tour, near Chamonix in the French Alps yesterday. An avalanche there on Tuesday claimed ten lives

British avalanche hero pulls three to safety

From Susan Bell in Chamonix

A BRITISH man risked his life to pull three people to safety from the debris of a chalet ripped from its foundations by Tuesday's avalanche in the French Alps that claimed 10 lives, it emerged yesterday.

Mike Cooper, 48, from Rochdale, who has worked as a trail guide in Chamonix for 12 years, used a sledgehammer to smash through eight inches of concrete and then squeezed through the hole to reach the survivors who were buried beneath 10 ft of snow in the village of Le Tour near here.

"I think it is miraculous that they survived unscathed in a room which had been almost inverted, pushed 100 yards down the mountain and crushed to smithereens," he said. "The scariest part was all the broken glass and electrical wires."

Mr Cooper was one of dozens of volunteers who worked through the night in an attempt to find survivors.

"I saw rescuers dragging dead bodies out of the snow. There was one house where an entire family were killed. It was very sad. The rescuers were local people who were digging out their own friends. They would stop, shed a tear, then just go on digging like robots," he said.



Mike Cooper: rescuer

As the search continued yesterday, the crew of the new James Bond film was drafted in to help. A unit of fire and medical workers was preparing for filming on *The World Is Not Enough*, when the avalanche struck at 2.40pm on Tuesday. "They are all specialists and we have lent them to the city," said Michael Wilson, the film's producer.

Last night 28 survivors had been pulled from the rubble and snow. Only one, a French boy aged 12, was seriously injured. Philippe Pathoux, 40, a fire services commander, described pulling the boy to safety in the early hours of yesterday morning.

"The whole house had collapsed. The little boy was lying under a plank wearing a T-shirt. His mother was lying a few metres in front of him. She was dead. His father who was lying nearby was also dead. The boy was suffering from hypothermia and was barely conscious. If it had not been for that plank, he would certainly have also died, suffocated by the snow," he said.

Dr Bernard Marsigny of Chamonix Hospital said the boy was out of danger and described him as "the miracle of the avalanche".

Meanwhile, the body of a British man who went missing on Tuesday while skiing off-piste in Courchevel was found by rescuers yesterday afternoon. The 28-year-old, who has not been named, is thought to be the sixth Briton to die in avalanches in the Alps in the past ten days.

A British volunteer, Victor Saunders, 48, from Banff, who is one of Britain's top veteran mountaineers and has worked as a mountain guide in Argentière for two years, described the wreckage left in the avalanche's wake at Chamonix.

"It was an extraordinary scene ... I saw one chalet which had drifted at least 100 yards from its foundations," he said.

Yesterday the sky over Chamonix was a perfect picture postcard blue. Only the police road blocks and circling helicopters contradicted this deceptively peaceful scene.

"There would only have been a second of fear. Death comes very fast in an avalanche. They wouldn't have known what happened," said Captain Jean-Claude Gin, the leader of the rescue operation.

Skiers undeterred, page 5

Olympic scandal spreads wider

More than 20 per cent of the 115-person membership of the International Olympic Committee are now implicated in the "gifts-for-votes" Salt Lake City Winter Games scandal. Yesterday ten more members were linked to the affair which involves hundreds of thousands of pounds of perks for IOC members.......Page 16

New Bill targets single mothers

Single mothers will have to attend interviews with Benefit Agency staff soon after their babies are born or risk losing all their state payments. Alastair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, described the measures in the Welfare Reform Bill as harsh but justifiable.......................Page 12

Hearts removed

The hearts of more than 170 children who died at the Bristol Royal Infirmary were kept for educational purposes without the consent of their parents, who were said to be horrified that they were buried without their hearts.....Page 6

Spain threatens Rock road and air traffic

By Dominic Searle in Gibraltar and Michael Binyon, Diplomatic Editor

GIBRALTAR was yesterday thrown back to the siege of Franco's days when Spain announced that it would ban all drivers with a Gibraltar licence from its roads and threatened to stop all flights to the Rock across its territory.

Traffic across the Gibraltar frontier with Spain was at a virtual standstill, with delays of up to six hours as officials throttled the flow. Within hours of the Spanish announcement, a driver was turned back by Spanish police who refused to recognise his licence.

Britain reacted sharply and swiftly. The Foreign Office denounced the Spanish proposals to bar overflights, saying that it was "extraordinary and unprecedented" for a European Union member to impose such a ban on a fellow EU member.

It also issued a reminder to Madrid that under EU law, each state is obliged to recognise the driving licence of a fellow state under the terms of the Second Driving Licence Requirement.

The sudden worsening of relations came after an agreement signed last week between Gibraltar and local Spanish fishermen which infuriated Spain.

An angry and deeply embarrassed Abel Matutes, the Spanish Foreign Minister, announced the new restrictions to the Spanish Parliament as part of a "panoply of possible measures" intended to put pressure on Gibraltar.

He made clear that Spain was particularly annoyed with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, for backing the agreement. Señor Matutes claimed that Britain had failed to stand by a verbal agreement on fishing around the Rock reached between himself and Mr Cook. "We have been the victims of broken promises by a friend and ally," he said.

Mr Cook may try to telephone the Spanish Foreign Minister within the next day or two to resolve the widening row. He and Señor Matutes tried on at least seven occasions to phone each other last week, but never got through. Each was using a mobile phone while travelling. The Spanish minister insists that he is still trying to reach Mr Cook, but has made no effort to do so from a land line.

Peter Caruana, Gibraltar's Chief Minister, said last night: "Spain appears to be implementing its threatened campaign of attrition against British Gibraltar."

Mr Caruana added: "The blockade is a gross breach of EU law."

Britain announced last night that it will lodge a protest at the European Commission. "We stand up for Gibraltar's interests," Mr Cook's spokesman said. "We do not

Continued on page 2, col 4

Declaration on human rights — for chimps

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

NEW ZEALAND could be the first country in the world to give the great apes "human" rights that could be enforced by a court.

A group of 38 lawyers, scientists and philosophers has submitted a new clause to a Bill going through Parliament which would give gorillas, chimpanzees and orang-utans the right to life, the right not to suffer cruel or degrading treatment and the right not to take part in all but the most benign of experiments. Anyone who believed a great ape was being mistreated would have the right to intervene — although that is an unlikely scenario since there are only 34 great apes in the country, all of which are well cared-for.

"The idea is to set a precedent that other countries can follow," Dr David Penny, a biologist from Massey University in Palmerston North, said.

The campaign to acknowledge that apes have rights has been led by the Great Ape Project, which has also petitioned the United Nations to issue a declaration containing the same provisions that the New Zealand group proposes, plus the right not to be imprisoned "without due legal process".

But many biologists fear that once apes have rights, it will not be long before rats do, too. Frans de Waal, of the Yerkes Regional Primate Research Centre in Atlanta, Georgia, said: "If you argue for rights on the basis of continuity between us and the great apes, then you have to argue continuity between apes and monkeys and so on, until eventually even the humble lab rat wins rights. After all, dogs can form deep emotional attachments and cats seem to have distinct personalities."

Peter Singer, a philosopher at Monash University in Melbourne who founded the Great Ape Project, said there was no reason not to give chimpanzees rights: "There is no logical reason for the broadening of moral concern to cease with humans."

Mr Singer has argued that apes such as the chimpanzee — which shares 98 per cent of the same genes as human beings — should be granted the same rights as intellectually disabled children. But opponents of the campaign argue that apes are still fundamentally different from human beings.

هكذا من الأصل

Railway firms under fire for late trains

By Arthur Leathley, transport correspondent

ONLY one of Britain's 25 train companies qualified for top marks yesterday under a new grading system designed to shame the worst performers on the rail network.

For the first time, train operators have been given grades between A and E, depending on their performance over the last year.

Ministers and rail regulators say that a simplified system of marking performance is needed to expose companies that fail to improve their punctuality and reliability.

Only the eight-mile-long Island Line on the Isle of Wight was able to achieve an A grade for both punctuality and the number of cancellations.

All 25 firms were given a grade according to both the number of trains delayed and the number cancelled. An overall grade was then awarded, based on the lower of the two scores. John O'Brien, the rail franchising director who compiled the grading system, admitted that some companies had suffered "rough justice" in the way they were graded but insisted that improvements needed to be made.

Mr O'Brien confirmed the findings of a survey by *The Times* which showed last week that the majority of routes in Britain had suffered a fall in punctuality during 1998. He said that punctuality remained the major problem for train companies, with 37 of the 68 route groups worsening. "Punctuality remains poor and these results are not good enough," said Mr O'Brien yesterday.

But when Mr O'Brien put Silverlink Trains at the bottom of his league table, he must have allowed himself a wry smile, for the company, which runs commuter services into London, takes him to work each day from his home in Berkhamsted.

He has not disguised his frustration as a fare-paying passenger at the quality of service that caused huge disruption to his journeys to and from work last September and October.

John Reid, the Transport Minister, said: "Once again performance figures are disappointing. Passengers are getting a poor service and this is unacceptable."

Dr Reid and John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, are staging a public "rail summit" on February 25, at which train operators and Railtrack, the track and signalling company, must put forward plans to reduce delays.

James Gordon, director general of the Association of Train Operating Companies, said: "Punctuality is proving a hard nut to crack in the face of unprecedented growth." Passenger numbers have risen at some seven per cent each year since privatisation.

Train companies yesterday criticised the latest system of grading performance as too vague in offering only a "snapshot" of current performance, without comparing with previous results. The tables showed Virgin's CrossCountry line had the poorest marks for punctuality while ScotRail had the best.

The shake-up in the way that train operators' performance is published also includes, for the first time, greater details of the number of trains run. The new information suggests that some 50,000 peak-time trains - one in six of the total - are delayed each month.

The Central Rail Users' Consultative Committee said the performance by companies on some routes was "truly awful" and that performance was not improving despite incentives.

Commentary, page 27
Reform urged, page 30

TRAIN OPERATOR PERFORMANCES

Train operator	Average number trains monitored over 4 weeks	Year ending Dec 1998 Punctuality average	grade	Reliability average	grade
CATEGORY A		%		%	
Island Line	1,711	95.0	A	99.8	A
CATEGORY B					
ScotRail	44,203	95.9	A	99.4	B
Merseyrail Electrics	13,274	95.3	A	99.2	B
Central (excluding Centro)	11,036	93.1	B	99.6	A
Anglia Railways	5,626	92.0	B	99.5	A
WAGN	18,691	91.2	B	99.1	B
Great Eastern	14,746	90.8	B	99.6	A
Gatwick Express	4,415	90.1	B	99.6	A
CATEGORY C					
LTS Rail	6,536	94.0	B	98.5	C
Northern Spirit	33,255	93.5	B	98.9	C
Wales & West	13,587	91.2	B	98.6	C
Connex South Central	32,407	90.0	B	98.9	C
Thameslink	5,462	89.9	C	98.5	C
Midland Main Line	1,465	89.8	C	99.8	A
South West Trains	31,936	89.5	C	99.4	B
Great North Eastern	2,382	88.3	C	99.2	B
Chiltern Railways	4,854	88.4	C	99.4	B
West Coast	3,376	85.9	C	99.5	A
CATEGORY D					
North Western Trains	35,426	90.9	B	98.2	D
Cardiff Railway	7,050	86.3	C	98.1	D
Great Western	3,311	84.5	D	99.0	B
Connex South Eastern	32,407	83.8	D	98.7	C
Thames Trains	15,459	83.7	D	98.6	C
Cross Country	2,233	82.3	D	99.3	B
CATEGORY E					
Silverlink Trains	10,966	91.2	B	97.9	E

Puntuality grades: A – 95.5 and above, B – 90, C – 85, D – 80, E – Below 80
Reliability (journeys completed) grades: A – 99.5 and above, B – 99, C – 98.5, D – 98, E – Below 98

Source: OPRAF



DAVID CHESKIN

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, gets to grips yesterday with a battering ram used by police against drug dealers in his Livingstone constituency

Spain bars Rock cars

Continued from page 1

not want this to become a great battle between us and the Spanish Government."

So intense were General Franco's threat against the Rock in 1967 that Harold Wilson, Prime Minister, had military contingency plans prepared for an invasion. Such a move is unthinkable today but more petty measures now seem probable.

The first wave came in 1967 when access to Spain became limited for Gibraltarians and oxygen supplies for the local hospitals were cut off. Even altar wine for the predominantly Catholic population was refused and as 1969 approached female and later male labour were withdrawn access to the Rock. When the iron gates finally slammed closed for 16 years in July 1969 only the dead were allowed free passage.

Telephone and postal services were cut off. So severe were air restrictions around the Rock that aircraft, both military and civilian, were forced to approach over the centre of the bay of Gibraltar and make a sharp turn onto the narrow runway. These restrictions were eventually relaxed.

Britain yesterday rejected Spain's complaint to the EU Commission last month that Gibraltar had failed to put into law 51 directives. It told the Commission that 31 of these directives had become Gibraltar law. Of the remaining 20, seven were not applicable because Gibraltar was outside the customs union, two were irrelevant to the Rock and a further seven were in the final stages of transposition into draft legislation.

Amy's strange adventure in Lucky Tie's den



POLITICAL SKETCH

How did it look to Amy? Tony Blair was observed yesterday at Prime Minister's Questions by a special guest. Amy, 14, from Hertfordshire, had phoned in while Mr Blair was appearing on *This Morning* with Richard and Judy last week to tell us about his wife's swimsuits and Glenn Hoddle. Blair's propagandists, their eye on the main chance, arranged for Amy to be carted in to Westminster to watch the PM joust.

Poor girl. She could have been listening to Cleopatra CDs on her Walkman. Instead she chose a crowd of jeering middle-aged men with soup-stained ties. The child is unhinged.

When first she entered the Strangers' Gallery, ushered in by inexplicable men in black tights, the hall she saw was half empty. A grey-haired lady with the air of a head teacher was sitting in a sort of ornamental bus-shelter at one end, keeping discipline.

A crowd arrived — and in walked Amy's new friend, the Prime Minister, wearing his "lucky" tie (silver, with green blobs) and an inane grin. For no apparent reason a man began to rant about land reform in the Highlands while Blair tried not to look bored. What did Amy make of this?

"William Hague!" announced the lady in the bus-shelter. A youngish man, almost completely bald, with a Yorkshire accent, got up. Something seemed to have upset him. He started shouting about the Foreign Office being an old banger. Mr Baldy was plainly deranged.

But now Mr Lucky Tie came over all queer. He ummed and ah'd and looked sick as a parrot. Baldy shouted even louder — about customs raids. Lucky Tie's grin fixed, then faded, as Baldy went ballistic, hurling abuse, questions and sneering jokes, while those behind him screamed "Hear hear!" and "Ha ha!" and those behind Blair shouted "Rubbish!" and "No!" and the bus shelter lady screamed "Order!"

All at once, Baldy subsided. A man from Cheshire told Lucky Tie something about the millennium bug that he seemed to know already.

A tall Scout-leader type asked two questions, about arms exports and Africa. Lucky Tie seemed unwilling to answer them, so he answered a different question. "Bye-bye Paddy!" shouted an elderly man, in a rude way. What was Amy making of this?

A gangling fellow with swivelling eyes boomed out something complicated about illegitimacy and marriage. The man's friends, sitting around him, looked embarrassed. Lucky Tie did not seem to want to answer this either. Everyone started shouting.

Amy Allen: invited to watch Westminster joust

From her bus-shelter the lady in buckled shoes and tights flew into a rage and began to scream and shout. This *may* have startled Amy, but in the chamber they behaved as though it was completely normal.

Then Baldy leapt up again and yelled something about tax. Luck Tie got crosser and crosser but avoided the question. Baldy shouted that he knew the answer anyway — and gave it. Amy will have wondered why, in that case, he had asked the question. Enraged, Lucky Tie worked himself up into a cry of "Tory boom and bust!" — at which those behind him gave a terrific cheer.

Baldy subsided again. An elderly gentleman from Totnes invited Lucky Tie to accompany him mackerel fishing, adding that they wouldn't catch any. Lucky Tie said "Thanks" but he was getting tired of invitations from this fellow. And, within minutes, they had all rushed out of the chamber.

Amy will have departed too. On Monday she told the Prime Minister that she was interested in politics. If she is still interested in politics, she needs her head seeing to.

A 'good fella', but America is still vague about Hague

From Damian Whitworth in Washington

WILLIAM HAGUE arrived in America last night to meet senior Republicans. The first item on his agenda should be to explain who he is.

The highlight is a meeting with George W. Bush, Governor of Texas and son of former President Bush. A favourite for the next presidential election, Mr Bush was just a little confused about Mr Hague.

Asked about his visitor, Mr Bush said "Who? Alexander?" apparently referring to Alexander Haig, Richard Nixon's chief of staff and a former Nato commander. When a reporter said no, *William*, the Governor rallied but appeared to think that the Leader of the Opposition held some sort of government position.

Mr Bush, who has yet to declare a run for the White House in 2000, said that Sir Christopher Meyer, the British Ambassador to Washington, had visited him last week and they had talked about "Minister" Hague. "He told me that he's a good fella' and a leader in your country. I'm looking forward to his visit."

Asked what they would talk about Mr Bush said: "I'm not absolutely sure. I'm honoured that he would choose to come." Prompted that Mr Hague is keen to learn about the brand of "compassionate conservatism" that has made him a presidential frontrunner, he talked enthusiastically about his policies but said that he would tell Mr Hague: "First you have to win. You've got to be in a position to implement policy."

Mr Hague, who arrived in New York last night and was due in Washington today, will not visit Tony Blair's close friend President Clinton.

Because his trip has the misfortune of coinciding with the culmination of the impeachment proceedings, he is expected to meet only relatively junior members of the Republican leadership on Capitol Hill.

At Washington's National Press Club, he will make a speech about what British and American conservatives can learn from each other, just as every journalist in the capital is consumed by the end of the trial.

Accompanied by his wife, Ffion, he will see Rudolph Giuliani, the Mayor of New York and Henry Kissinger, the former Secretary of State, as well as conservative leaders in Canada.

Blair aims to break Ulster deadlock

By Philip Webster
Political Editor

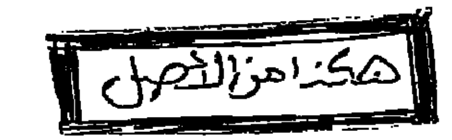
A PERSONAL push to break the deadlock over decommissioning of terrorist weapons is being planned by Tony Blair.

Government sources disclosed yesterday that the Prime Minister could return to Stormont for a new round of talks if the Ulster Unionists and Sinn Fein fail to reach a compromise in time for next month's deadline for the transfer of legislative powers from London to Belfast.

Mr Blair was present for the day and night negotiations that led to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

Parties at the Northern Ireland Assembly are due to begin a major debate on Monday when proposals for the creation of ten ministerial departments and six cross-border institutions are likely to be endorsed.

However, the issue of IRA decommissioning is expected to then bring deadlock and there are fears that the sides will be nowhere near meeting the March 10 deadline.



Marquess puts paid to wife's open invitation

Husband said eco-activists would not be welcome, writes Simon de Bruxelles

HE is an aristocratic City financier and heir to a large chunk of Gloucestershire. She is a former actress who dresses in second-hand clothes and has devoted herself to the environmental protest movement.

So married life was never going to be dull for the Marquess of Worcester and his Marchioness, formerly known as the actress Tracy Ward. And although Lord Worcester did not join his wife in the latest eco-action he was usually prepared to give moral support. Until now, that is.

On Sunday, Lady Worcester appeared on a television discussion programme and seemed to issue an open invitation to every "greenie, gypsy and New Age traveller" to set up camp on her father-in-law's Badminton estate. The scenes afterwards in the kitchen at the couple's rambling Dower House on the edge of the Duke of Beaufort's 52,000 acre estate can only be imagined.

Lady Worcester, 40, whose husband will one day inherit the land and its 40-room stately home, admitted that idealism had got the better of her during a debate on local television.

Having defended the residents of Tinker's Bubble, an "eco-village" in Somerset, she was asked whether she would have any objection if they decided to put up their tents and wigwams at Badminton. Lady Worcester replied: "I would love it. They are nice people. They understand about sustainable living."

Yesterday, however, the mother-of-three said she wanted to "clarify" that statement. "I would love them to come and set up in my back yard, but it's just not possible.

"For concerned Badminton residents and farmers my Utopian community housing has been rejected categorically by Harry, who will not be selling any land to accommodate my dreams."

It is not the first time the couple have clashed over Lady Worcester's environmental ambitions. She is on record as saying her 46-year-old Eton-educated husband drew the line at using "recycled" lavatory paper. The marquess also vetoed plans to create a compost lavatory so that household waste could fertilise their roses and the vegetable garden. This was, however, of an entirely different order of magnitude.

An apologetic Lady Worcester said: "This isn't a case of 'not in my back yard'.

"I would love them to come and create a blueprint for sustainable living here. We are like-minded people. But I do not own a single acre of land and Harry is not selling any and does not want any development here. We have never needed to discuss it before now but I have to make my comments clear.

"I think most people would not object to these people living close to their homes if they legitimately bought the land to live in harmony with it."

The couple, who married in 1987, have two sons Bobby, ten, and Xan, three, and a seven-year-old daughter Bella. Lady Worcester, known as Tracy Worcester in the environmental movement, is a trustee of Friends of the Earth, the Soil Association and Transport 2000. She is also an associate director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture, president of both Community Action and the Good Gardeners' Association. She was a leading campaigner against the Newbury bypass and is a familiar face at environmental protests.

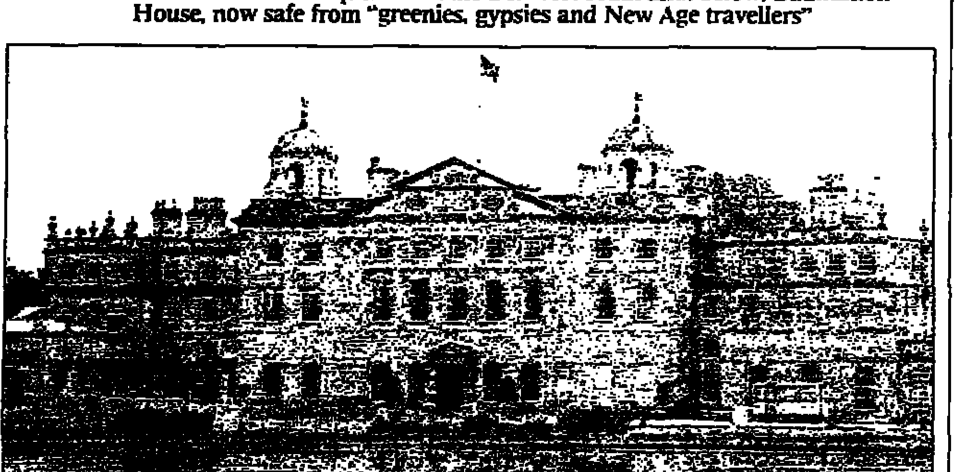
In the 1980s Tracy Ward, whose sister is the actress Rachel Ward, was better known for her part in the cheesy television series *Cats' Eyes* and her role as Miss Scarlet in a short-lived television version of Cleudo. Last year she stood for selection as a Green Party candidate in the European elections but withdrew over her refusal to condemn fox-hunting. The Beaufort Hunt reigns at the heart of the hunting establishment.

The marquess, Henry John Fitzroy Somerset, known to friends as Bunter, the heir to the 11th Duke of Beaufort, prefers to keep a lower profile despite his 6ft 6in frame.

His father's estate hosts the annual three-day Badminton Horse Trials every May. It attracts an international field of riders and nearly half-a-million spectators — and definitely no wigwams.



DARREN FLETCHER



The Marchioness and Marquess with the Beaufort Hunt and, below, Badminton House, now safe from "greenies, gypsies and New Age travellers"

Tinker's Bubble: Marchioness invited them all home

PC told stewardess 'don't drive in my county'

By Caroline Sigley

A POLICE constable flashed his warrant card at a senior air stewardess and warned her never to drive through his county after she refused to serve him a bottle of gin, a court was told yesterday.

PC Richard Perrett, 26, is also alleged to have told three police officers not to cross the border into West Yorkshire after they met him off a flight from Florida to Manchester in February last year.

The threat followed drunken, abusive and bawdy behaviour by PC Perrett, his father, Inspector David Perrett, and Peter Beck, a publican, Manchester Crown Court was told.

All three men from Halifax deny drunkenness on board the Britannia Airways flight.

Angela Meddings, a cabin manager, said PC Perrett had asked for a bottle of gin and ten cans of tonic. He was told that he could buy the gin but not consume it on board. She said: "He then produced a warrant card and said words to the effect of 'Come on, we're all on the same team'."

She told him it was not Britannia Airways policy to allow passengers to drink from litre bottles, to which he allegedly replied: "Never come to West Yorkshire or never drive through West Yorkshire."

After complaints, the men had their passports confiscated. They were also escorted from the plane by police.

The court was told how PC Perrett had told PC Terry Cornforth, PC Ian Hambleton and Inspector Brian Hulley that they should not drive or pass through West Yorkshire.

PC Hambleton said that "the whole plane erupted in cheers and applause as we chucked them off". All three officers said that the defendants were unsteady on their feet and had slurred speech.

Inspector Perrett, 49, who has served with the West Yorkshire force for 28 years, denied gyrating to scenes from *The Full Monty*. "I wasn't drunk. I expect that as a group we may have been jovial."

The hearing continues.

(PA News)



Getty: escapes US taxes

Getty son gets Irish passport for £1m

By Audrey Magel, Ireland Correspondent

TARA GETTY, son of the oil heir Sir John Paul Getty, has obtained an Irish passport after investing £1 million in an Irish company, it emerged yesterday. His new nationality allows him to circumvent American tax laws on income and inheritance.

Mr Getty, 29, who married a farmer's daughter from Surrey last year, is the third member of his extended family to buy an Irish passport under the controversial "passports for investment" scheme. The system was abolished last April after it emerged that it was being abused by Irish politicians. Mr Getty's application was one of about ten outstanding to be processed.

His cousins, Mark Harris Getty and Christopher Ronald Getty, bought Irish passports in 1995, investing at least £2 million in Irish companies. None lives permanently in Ireland. Tara Getty will continue to live in South Africa with his wife Jessica, 26.

About 145 Irish passports have been sold to foreigners since the scheme was started by Charles Haughey, the former Prime Minister, in 1988. It generated about £90 million. But it remains unclear if all the money was invested in the Exchequer or if some was retained for politicians' private use.

A tribunal investigating payments to Mr Haughey is examining all the files on the passport scheme. A government source said the investigation was unlikely to involve the Gettys, who met all the criteria and properly invested their money in Irish companies.

Couple on run from family's hit men

By Roland Watson and Paul Wilkinson

A DEATH sentence imposed by a British Asian family on their daughter and her husband is still troubling the couple six years after they eloped.

Ann Cryer, the Labour MP for Keighley, told the Commons yesterday that the parents of Zena Briggs (not her real name) had hired hit men to track her down because she refused to marry a first cousin who lived in Pakistan.

During a debate on women's rights, Mrs Cryer told MPs that Mrs Briggs and her husband lived in perpetual fear of the family. Mrs Cryer also told of another woman who was on the run because her mother had threatened to kill her after she fled from an abusive husband.

"Our Asian women constituents are perfectly entitled to expect the same human rights that are afforded to us ... They are also entitled to expect us to help them to enjoy those human rights," Mrs Cryer said.

In reply, Mike O'Brien, the junior Home Office minister, said there was no evidence that arranged marriages were less successful than others, but said: "The Government is aware of the issues of forced marriages. The victims are very small in number but their voice will not be ignored."

Rembrandt self-portrait not the whole picture

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

A PAINTING of Rembrandt was always praised as a masterpiece among his self-portraits. The fact that it was not quite in his usual style was said to add to its importance.

At the same time, a somewhat rougher painting in another gallery was held to be just a copy. But not any more.

Yesterday the more famous painting was declared to be the copy, while the rougher version emerged as the true work of the master. The switch in attitude by scholars was reported by Neil MacGregor, the Director of the National Gallery, which is planning to include both images as a draw to its exhibition of Rembrandt self-portraits this summer.

The demoted painting from 1629 comes from the Mauritshuis in the Hague. He said: "It was long regarded as one of the supreme early portraits. It is almost certainly a copy." Doubts were first raised in 1991 by a German scholar, Claus Grimm, but his view was discounted as the painting was considered so fine.

David Bomford, the National Gallery's senior restorer of paintings, recalled how "everybody said, 'What a quaint idea'." The quality of the painting "seduced people", he said. Even though the style is not entirely in keeping with Rembrandt's hand, scholars were convinced that it was a masterpiece that "stands alone" among his works.

In retrospect, Mr Bomford said, scholars should have questioned its uniqueness further. The other picture, in the Germanisches National Museum in Nuremberg, was regarded as "a rough copy, interesting but not terribly important", although the rough, granular handling of the paint was more typical of Rembrandt. What clinched the Grimm theory was scientific analysis — infra-red reflectography, conducted by the Mauritshuis — and bringing together the two versions for the first time in Nuremberg.

Tests on the Mauritshuis portrait revealed underdrawing that a copyist would do if setting down a composition. Dr Bomford said that the Mauritshuis was "not in the least bit dismayed", but Nuremberg is "extremely pleased".

Peter van der Ploeg, a senior curator at the Mauritshuis, said they were now researching who painted their picture. Among the contenders are artists who worked in Rembrandt's studio, such as Gerard Dou or Jan Lievens. They are considered masters in their own right. Rembrandt used to get his pupils to copy his self-portraits as exercises.

The exhibition from June 9 to September 5 is jointly organised by the National Gallery and the Mauritshuis. □ The National Gallery has urged Parliament to push through legislation allowing the Burrell Collection to lend a Rembrandt to the Mauritshuis, where the exhibition will be shown from September. Burrell's will stipulated there be no loans abroad.



Less is more: the copy, left, and the rougher original

'Asylo': a singular new currency

By Dominic Kennedy

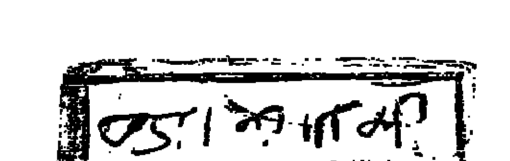
A BLACK MARKET has been created in supermarket tokens issued to asylum-seekers to buy basics, such as food, with the refugees selling them for cash to buy non-essential items such as cigarettes. The Home Office, which is planning to replace cash payments to refugee families with shelters and food tokens, was warned that the fraud in tokens could eventually reach £20 million a year.

The problem is so great in Kent, where there are 2,600 asylum-seekers, that the joke among refugee organisations is that Britain has its own single European currency — the "Asylo". The asylum-seekers sell their vouchers, with the exchange rate being 60p cash for every £1 in tokens. Middlemen sell them on for 90p.

Vouchers are central to the Government's policy of being faster, firmer and fairer in dealing with applications for asylum. From 2001 all refugees should be told within two months whether their application has been accepted, with an appeal completed in another four. During that time they will get free housing, and vouchers instead of money for essentials.

A voucher economy has already emerged because councils are statutorily required to feed and shelter destitute single adult asylum-seekers, but forbidden from giving them money. Town halls have created a patchwork of voucher systems. Under most of them, the vouchers are issued in the name of a shop, such as a branch of a particular supermarket, but with nothing to identify the user. Asylum-seeking families with children now get money to buy essentials such as milk and nappies, but the Government proposes to make them use vouchers too.

Martyn Ayre, a social services official at Kent County Council, told a Local Government Association seminar yesterday that the vouchers were an administrative nightmare.



Jury sees photos of 'road of death'


The house Mr Sawoniuk was said to have expropriated

Tim Jones reports on the second day of the war crimes trial of a retired BR ticket inspector

THE Old Bailey jury in Britain's first war crimes trial were yesterday shown photographs of the East European village where Anthony Sawoniuk, now 77, was alleged to have murdered Jews for the Nazis.

The pictures included scenes of the track that became known as the "road of death" down which men, women and children were herded to their executions.

Domachevo, now in Belarus, where Mr Sawoniuk is alleged to have ordered four Jews to strip before shooting them and pushing them into open graves, has changed much since it fell to the horror of the Nazi war machine. But as he took the jury through 40 recent photographs, John Nutting, QC, for the prosecution, identified many of the locations associated with the systematic murder of Jews.

His oldest exhibit, an aerial photograph of the village taken in 1944 by the Allies, showed that there was little left of the ghetto area where, two years earlier, 2,900 Jews had been massacred.

Mr Nutting also produced a photograph of the wooden house, still standing, which Mr Sawoniuk was said to have had removed from the ghetto and rebuilt for his own occupation.

Mr Sawoniuk, a retired British Rail ticket collector from Bermondsey, South London, faces four charges of murder under the War Crimes Act. He sat impassively as the photographs were displayed.

As though conducting a geography class, Mr Nutting patiently led the eight men and four women jurors through bundles of maps, photographs and computer images of the scenes of the alleged crimes.

Although Mr Sawoniuk faces only four charges, the Old Bailey court has been given accounts of how he is alleged to have murdered many more, merely because they were Jews. On one occasion, he is said to have ordered about 15 weeping Jewish women, of various ages, to remove their clothes before shooting them with a sub-machinegun.

Mr Nutting was introducing the jury to the maps and photographs in order to prepare them for their trip at the weekend, when they will travel to Belarus to see the scenes of the alleged crimes.

One photograph showed the memorial stone in the sand hills marking the mass grave where the Jews were massacred. Another photograph showed the site of the old police station from where Mr Sawoniuk, in his role as a member of the police force established by the Nazis, is said to have embraced the policy of the "final solution" with enthusiasm.

Mr Nutting showed the jury a number of photographs of the area known as the sand hills. A short distance from the village, this is where the 2,900 Jews were exterminated after being driven from their ghetto in the centre of the town on being told to report for a roll call.

The prosecution alleges that the sand hills, an area of trees and shrubs, is where in the following weeks Mr Sawoniuk executed others he had flushed out of their hiding places in a search-and-kill operation.

While little remains of the original ghetto area where the Jews were kept behind barbed wire and allowed to freeze and starve during one of the worst winters in memory, the jury were shown photographs of the area as it is now to help them to follow the prosecution case.

Other pictures showed the blacksmith's shop from where witnesses claim they saw Mr Sawoniuk lead some of the Jews to their death.

The jury was also shown shots of the Catholic church from which, on the day of the main massacre on Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, on Sunday, September 20, 1942, worshippers were ordered out to witness the scene being enacted outside.

One worshipper, Galina Puchkina, saw batches of between 50 and 70 Jews being led out of the ghetto and ordered to strip as they cried and screamed.

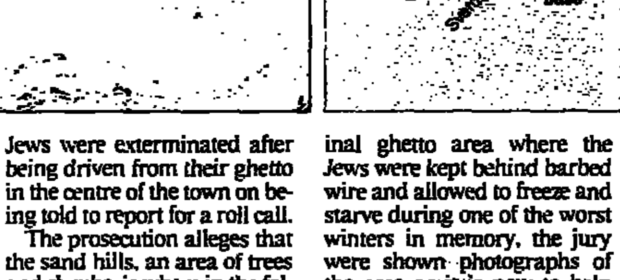
The Jews were then taken to the sand hills, from where Miss Puchkina and her sister heard the sounds of shooting, sub-machinegun fire and single shots.

The hearing continues.


Sawoniuk: denies the charges of murder


The memorial marking the mass grave where the Jews of Domachevo were massacred: below, the "road of death" leading from the village





World Service no longer calling Germany

By Michael Binyon
Diplomatic Editor

THE BBC German service, started in 1938 to broadcast anti-Nazi messages to Germany, is to be closed, the BBC announced yesterday.

The closure is part of a shake-up of the World Service announced by Mark Byford, the chief executive. This will also see a massive increase in funding for Internet services to put all the BBC broadcasts on the Net by 2005, the cutting of short-wave broadcasts and the expansion of FM frequencies around the world.

The German language service, which employed writers and politicians such as Thomas Mann and Richard Crossman, is now seen as something of an anachronism. The BBC says that nine out of ten Germans listening to the BBC now listen to the World Service in English.

The World Service changes have been boosted with £30 million announced under the Comprehensive Spending Review and £14 million in capital investment during the next three years.

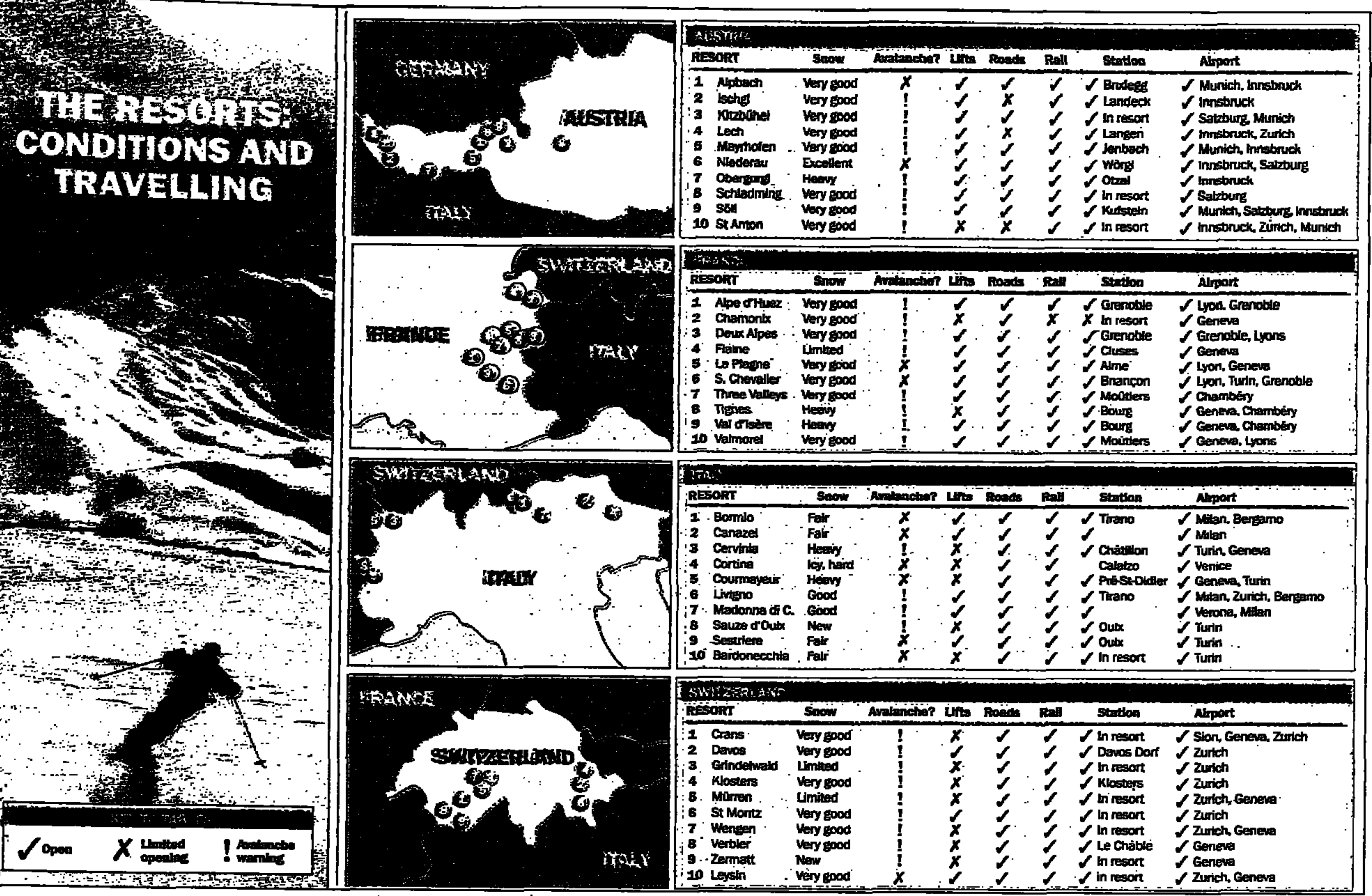
Twelve language services will be fully multimedia in both text and audio by 2002 and all language services will be in RealAudio on the Internet by 2005.

The World Service will also expand news coverage of South Asia and Africa, the Far East and the Middle East. It will launch two continuous streams of English programming — a 24-hour *World Service News*; and general programmes on *World Service Plus*. Both will be available on the Internet and satellite.

The Foreign Office grant-in-aid to the World Service will increase from £161 million this year to £175.5 million, £174 million and £177.7 million during the next three years. The additional funds represent an average increase of 3.9 per cent over the three years.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, welcomed the BBC's "energetic and imaginative" use of the money, and said he had secured for the World Service the best settlement he could.

Avalanches fail to deter skiers



AUSTRIA

RESORT		Snow	Avalanche?	Lifts	Roads	Rail	Station	Airport
1	Alpbach	Very good	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ Brixlegg	✓ Munich, Innsbruck
2	Ischgl	Very good	!	✓	✗	✓	✓ Landeck	✓ Innsbruck
3	Kitzbühel	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Salzburg, Munich
4	Lech	Very good	!	✓	✗	✓	✓ Langen	✓ Innsbruck, Zurich
5	Mayrhofen	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Jenbach	✓ Munich, Innsbruck
6	Niederau	Excellent	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ Wörgl	✓ Innsbruck, Salzburg
7	Obergurgl	Heavy	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Otzal	✓ Innsbruck
8	Schladming	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Salzburg
9	Söll	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Kufstein	✓ Munich, Salzburg, Innsbruck
10	St Anton	Very good	!	✗	✗	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Innsbruck, Zürich, Munich

FRANCE

RESORT		Snow	Avalanche?	Lifts	Roads	Rail	Station	Airport
1	Alpe d'Huez	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Grenoble	✓ Lyon, Grenoble
2	Chamonix	Very good	!	✗	✓	✗	✗ In resort	✓ Geneva
3	Deux Alpes	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Grenoble	✓ Grenoble, Lyons
4	Flaine	Limited	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Cluses	✓ Geneva
5	La Plagne	Very good	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ Aime	✓ Lyon, Geneva
6	S. Chevalier	Very good	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ Briançon	✓ Lyon, Turin, Grenoble
7	Three Valleys	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Moûtiers	✓ Chambéry
8	Tignes	Heavy	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ Bourg	✓ Geneva, Chambéry
9	Val d'Isère	Heavy	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Bourg	✓ Geneva, Chambéry
10	Valmorel	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Moûtiers	✓ Geneva, Lyons

ITALY

RESORT		Snow	Avalanche?	Lifts	Roads	Rail	Station	Airport
1	Bormio	Fair	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ Tirano	✓ Milan, Bergamo
2	Canazei	Fair	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ Milan
3	Cervinia	Heavy	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ Châtillon	✓ Turin, Geneva
4	Cortina	Icy, hard	✗	✗	✓	✓	Calalzo	✓ Venice
5	Courmayeur	Heavy	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓ Pré-St-Didier	✓ Geneva, Turin
6	Livigno	Good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Tirano	✓ Milan, Zurich, Bergamo
7	Madonna di C.	Good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ Verona, Milan
8	Sauze d'Oulx	New	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ Oulx	✓ Turin
9	Sestriere	Fair	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ Oulx	✓ Turin
10	Bardonecchia	Fair	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Turin

SWITZERLAND

RESORT		Snow	Avalanche?	Lifts	Roads	Rail	Station	Airport
1	Crans	Very good	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Sion, Geneva, Zurich
2	Davos	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ Davos Dorf	✓ Zurich
3	Grindelwald	Limited	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Zurich
4	Klosters	Very good	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ Klosters	✓ Zurich
5	Mürren	Limited	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Zurich, Geneva
6	St Moritz	Very good	!	✓	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Zurich
7	Wengen	Very good	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Zurich, Geneva
8	Verbier	Very good	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ Le Châble	✓ Geneva
9	Zermatt	New	!	✗	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Geneva
10	Leysin	Very good	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ In resort	✓ Zurich, Geneva

Many pistes closed but Britons still flying in

BY JOANNA BALE

SKI tour operators were inundated with calls yesterday from clients seeking reassurances about safety in the Alps after a series of deaths in avalanches.

Despite the risks, however, there has been an upsurge in bookings from people hoping to take advantage of excellent snow conditions once dangerous areas have been cleared.

Many are parents aiming to take their children skiing over half-term next week. Lawrence Hicks, sales and public relations manager for Inghams, said: "Those going out this weekend will find a lot of pistes closed because of avalanche dangers, but we are hoping things will improve as the week progresses.

"We have had lots of calls from anxious people and we are telling them to observe local guidelines, ski in groups and not to ski off-piste."

Andrew Dunn, managing director of Ski Scott Dunn, said: "We have had hundreds of people calling us for guidance. We have banned all our staff from skiing off-piste and have put out memos to guests advising them not to ski off-piste, and certainly not without a guide."

He added: "With all this snow, we are on for a brilliant end-of-season, so there has been a great deal of interest and I expect to fill everything from February 20 onwards."

In Austria, the army airlifted supplies to about 25,000 tourists stranded in Lech and St Anton after snow blocked roads. Although many resorts, such as Chamonix, were closed yesterday because of a high risk of avalanches, work was under way to clear unstable snow using explosives.

Jean-Claude Foudot, of Ski Weekend, which specialises in short breaks and tailor-made holidays, said: "Once everything is cleared, the skiing will be fantastic. Even though there are problems in Chamonix at the moment we are still advising people to go because things will be sorted out very quickly."

Laura Zachary, of the Ski Club of Great Britain, said it had been inundated with calls. She said: "People are worried about whether it is safe to go. We are telling them not to cancel their holidays because although some resorts are closed, they will be cleared very quickly and the skiing is going to be fantastic.

"We are telling them not to go off-piste, but to stick to the pistes which are open. The authorities do not open pistes unless they are safe from avalanches. Those with children tend to stick to nursery runs which are lower down and extremely safe.

"If you wish to go off-piste you should use guides and avalanche transceivers. We do not allow any of our guides to go off-piste in grade 4 or 5 warnings, which are the most serious."

Although more snow is forecast at the weekend, it will be much lighter than recent snowfalls and will be interspersed with bright spells.

Ms Zachary added: "People should not panic about more snow being forecast because it will be nothing like we have had already."

Mother wins hearing on Scots Guards

BY AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE mother of a teenager shot dead by two Scots Guards in Belfast yesterday won the first stage of a legal bid to have the soldiers thrown out of the Army.

Jean McBride, whose 18-year-old son, Peter, was shot in the back by James Fisher and Mark Wright in 1992, received permission to apply for a judicial review of the Ministry of Defence decision to allow them to remain in the Army.

Granting the permission in the Belfast High Court, Mr Justice Kerr warned Mrs McBride that she was facing "a very difficult case".

Fisher and Wright were released on licence last year after serving six years for murdering McBride. They said that they believed he had a coffee jar bomb, but evidence emerged during the trial showing that he had not. The pair were released after a campaign by supporters including the independent MP Martin Bell, and allowed to return to their Army regiments.

Mrs McBride said that she was delighted with yesterday's decision. "Peter's death isn't getting any easier after almost seven years. But if I get my day in court I'll be happy," she said.

Paul O'Connor, solicitor for the McBride family, said: "We want these soldiers dismissed from the Army and the Government to accept that the judgment of the court when they were convicted of murder was the right one and that a small group of people within the armed forces does not have the right to go against that."

It is the first time that such an application has been granted against the MoD, which intends to challenge the move.

Under Queen's Regulations, members of the Armed Forces convicted of murder and other custodial offences must be dismissed unless the Army Board finds that exceptional circumstances exist.



Mrs McBride: wants the soldiers sacked

Port accused of selling its soul to the Spanish

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A ONCE-GREAT fishing port has been accused of "selling its soul" by allowing 34 Spanish boats to buy into its fish producers' organisation.

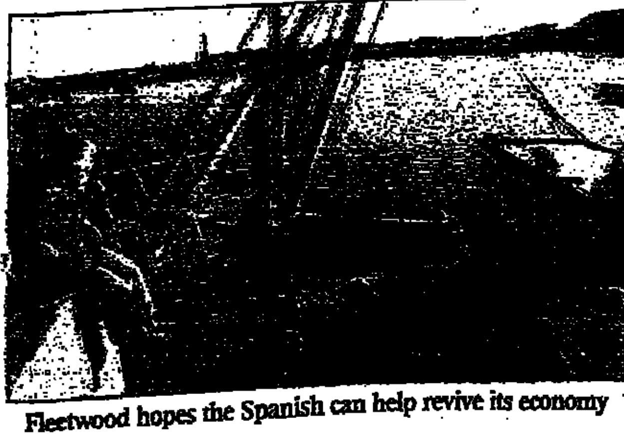
The partnership between La Coruña and Fleetwood, Lancashire, has been condemned by fishermen around Britain as "sleeping with the enemy".

Fleetwood, where 700 work in the fishing industry compared with 6,000 a quarter of a century ago, has been forced out of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations. But skippers in the port insist the marriage of convenience with traditional maritime rivals is necessary to save the port from oblivion.

As part of the deal, the Spanish promised to land a sizeable part of their catch in the Fylde port to boost its flagging market. But for the first six weeks they have instead returned to their home port with cargoes of hake, megrim and monk fish.

Mark Hamer, chief executive of Fleetwood Fish Producer's Organisation, said that short-term unpopularity was a price worth paying for the port's survival. The Spaniards' joining fee saved the organisation from bankruptcy, paid for a £4,500 office refit and a secretary, provided funds to buy in quota and freed local trawlermen to target species like cod and haddock, unpopular with housewives in Madrid.

"We have a terrible time. If we had not taken these steps, we would have been in an dodgy state," he said.



Fleetwood hopes the Spanish can help revive its economy

Ruinous end to row over land strip

BY JOHN ASTON

A DISPUTE between neighbours over a small strip of land worth £200 ended yesterday with a couple facing the prospect of selling their Cotswolds retirement home to pay a huge legal bill. The ruinous row over where the boundary lay lasted 18 years.

It was a disastrous end for George Powling, 80, and his wife Elizabeth, 76, when the Court of Appeal ruled for Douglas Woolls, 78. It means that the couple must leave their five-bedroom house at Brimscombe, Glou-cestershire.

Mrs Powling said: "It has been more than a nightmare — if that is possible. We will definitely have to sell the house to pay the court costs. "It is all over a tiny piece of land which was only worth £200 when we first had trouble. It is crazy, I can tell you. Our life savings are already gone. Now we shall have to find up to another £100,000 by the time we have finished paying court costs."

The court yesterday allowed an appeal by Mr Woolls and overturned a Gloucester County Court ruling in April 1997 that the Powlings owned the disputed 12ft-by-60ft strip by an old orchard drystone While Mr Woolls was entitled only to £2 damages for trespass, the Powlings must pay 75 per cent of legal costs and Mr Woolls the remainder. *— PA News*

Hospital kept hearts of 170 dead children

Parents were not told of organ removal at the Bristol Infirmary, reports Simon de Bruxelles

THE *hearts of more than* 170 children who died after surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary were removed and kept for "educational purposes" without their parents' consent, it was disclosed yesterday.

Many of the children died as a result of a series of operations that led to three surgeons being found guilty of serious professional misconduct. The news that they were buried without their hearts has horrified their families.

The Bristol Children's Heart Action Group said yesterday that between 170 and 300 children's hearts had been retained after operations in the hospital over the 12 years to 1995. The hearts and other organs were preserved in for*maldehyde without the know*ledge of parents after autopsies.

The United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust yesterday confirmed that organs were retained for "further examination, education or audit purposes". The trust said that it *was standard practice in hospitals* to retain organs without consent of the next of kin. However, it admitted this procedure appeared outdated and the *parental consent* given for post-mortem examinations to be carried out on the children "was not as informed as modern standards require".

Michaela Willis, the chairwoman of the action group, said: "It was known that hearts had been retained with*out knowledge or consent in* isolated cases, but the trust had not made us aware until now that hearts had been retained systematically. The shock and sorrow that this disclosure will cause to parents ... is incalculable."

Mrs Willis said that the infir*mary would write to each of* the parents whose child's heart had been kept within the next few days. Those whose child's heart or tissue had not been retained would be given a personal written assurance of the fact.

Helen Rickard, whose daughter, Samantha, died in 1992 after an operation at the hospital by James Wisheart, *who was struck off after the in*quiry by the General Medical Council, discovered her daughter's heart had been retained after looking through medical records. "I was absolutely devastated. I thought I had buried *my daughter after the opera*tion, but then discovered she was not laid completely to rest," she said.

"If I had known that Samantha's heart had been taken out I would have insisted that it was put back *in before she* was buried. I am absolutely certain *that at no stage* was I asked for permission to use her heart for teaching or research."

The trust said yesterday that it had been contacting parents during the past few months to tell them that it had kept their children's hearts after operations between 1976 and 1995, *and to ask what they wanted* done with them.

Kate Birch, a spokeswoman for the trust, said: "The retention of body tissue for examination, education and audit pur*poses has always been stand*ard practice.

"The *majority* of post-mortems are undertaken at the request of the coroner. All other post-mortems were undertaken with the consent of families, but it is accepted that this con*sent was not as informed as* modern standards require."

Nick Harvey, the Liberal Democrat MP for North Devon, said that he would table a question in the House of Commons about the retention of organs without consent, and that *he wanted Frank Dobson, the* Health Secretary, to review the law on the matter.

"This is a disgrace that turns my stomach," Mr Harvey said. "The parents didn't even know this practice was going on. The tragic story of ba*bies' deaths* at the *infirmary* just gets worse and worse. It's extremely upsetting for the parents of babies who died."

The disclosure comes six weeks before the opening of the public inquiry into the deaths of 29 babies after heart surgery at the infirmary. Four other children were left brain damaged after operations at the hospital. The Bristol Children's Heart Action Group claims that many more children died.



BARRY BATCHELOR

Michaela Willis: "The shock and sorrow that this will cause parents is incalculable"

Head of inquiry accused of bias

BY MARTHA LINDEN

THE president of the doc*tors' disciplinary* body was accused of bias at the open*ing of an appeal* yesterday by one of the men struck off over heart surgery on babies.

Sir Donald Irvine, president of the General Medical Council, was accused of failing to disclose that his grandchild was being treated for a heart *condition* during last year's inquiry by *the council* into 53 heart operations on children at the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

The inquiry, of which Sir Donald was chairman, lasted seven months and was the longest and most com*plex it had undertaken.*

John Roylance, the chief executive of the United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust, was ordered to be struck off the medical register. He and surgeons James Wisheart and Janardan *Dhas*mana were found guilty of *serious* professional misconduct.

Opening an appeal before the judicial committee of the Privy Council on behalf of Dr Roylance, Robert Francis, QC, said that Sir Donald had "clear emotional links" with the parents in the heart babies' cases. "We would submit that there is at least an appearance of clear emotional links between the circumstances in relation to *his own family* and those of the other par*ents in these cases*," he told the hearing.

Mr Frances said that the complaints about Dr Roylance all related to his actions as a manager and not as a doctor. The hearing continues. *(PA News)*



Irvine: grandson had a heart condition

Parents force inquiry into meningitis

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES, WEST OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

AN OFFICIAL inquiry was ordered yesterday into the handling of the meningitis out*break in South Wales, which* has killed three people.

Jon Owen Jones, the Welsh Office Health Minister, bowed to pressure from parents concerned about the spread of the disease, which has struck 11 people in the town of Pontypridd.

Mr Jones said he was asking a hastily convened study *group to report as soon as pos*sible. He said that Ruth Hall, the Chief Medical Officer of Wales, would nominate individuals with appropriate experience and knowledge.

The National Meningitis Trust and the *Meningitis* Research Foundation will be *asked to join the group, which* will be chaired by Professor Ian Cameron, Provost and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Wales College of Medicine.

There have been 56 cases of *meningitis in Wales so far this* year compared with 32 in the *whole of 1998.*

The move follows concern over the delay in giving medical treatment to pupils at Coedylan Comprehensive School in *Pontypridd. Vaccinations* were not given until nine days *after the death of Gareth* Gould, 15.

Parents claim that the delay may have allowed seven other children to develop the illness and put others at risk. Medical experts contend that as the vast majority of cases of meningitis are isolated instances, it *would be wrong simply to dis*pense powerful antibiotics to *everyone with whom they* might have come into contact.

More than 1,700 pupils and staff at three schools attended by the victims of the Pontypridd outbreak have been vaccinated during the past few days. But parents *of pupils* at the Cardinal Newman Comprehensive are angry that their children have not been offered treatment after the death of a popular home economics teacher.

Fewer than half the school's 688 pupils turned up for les*sons yesterday after the death* of Lynne James, 55.

*The Bro-Taf health authori*ty says it has been unable to find any link between Mrs James's illness and the victims from other schools in the area, and that it is treating it as an "isolated" infection.

But yesterday it was disclosed that Joyce Davies, 66, *who died on January 30, the* first fatality of the outbreak, has grandchildren at the school where Mrs James taught. She lived half a mile from the Cardinal Newman school.

*Doctors treating Stuart Mo*tram, 16, the most seriously ill victim of the *meningitis* outbreak, said yesterday that his condition had greatly improved.

Pupils taught to play by the book

BY HANNAH BETTS

FATHERS and grandfathers backed by three Saracens rugby players set out this week to convince the boys of a Hertfordshire school that reading *is not for sissies.*

Boys and girls at Fleetville *Infant School, St Albans,* listened attentively as 50 fathers and grandfathers told *stories* to small groups of children.

After lunch it was the turn of the track-suited rugby players, who showed that macho men can be as keen on reading as they are on sport. Brendon *Reidy*, who became a father two weeks ago, said that he *was looking forward* to reading to his son, Lewis. "Reading opens up a whole *world* of adventure and it's essential that we encourage boys to become a part of that."

Peter Freeman, a parent and one of the organisers of the school reading day, turned up in his *karate* outfit for the event. Explaining its purpose, *he said:* "We all know what it's like. You come home at 7.30 in the evening and the last thing you want to do is sit down with a book. But if we don't encourage children to read now they'll never pick it up in their future lives. I want them to be able to say: 'Look there's a bloke who's six foot and who's a sportsman. If he likes reading then it must be all right'."

Anita Tullberg, the head teacher, said: "Research has *shown that where there are dif*ficulties boys tend to turn off reading *around* the age of seven. Our goal is to build an avid generation of readers from which no child is excluded."

☐ Call *The Times* on 0171-895-9018 (office hours only) and let us know about your to*ken-raising ideas for the Free* Books For Schools scheme.



Token, page 33

Energy firms defeated over pension raid

TWO pensioners who accused the electricity industry of raiding their pension funds have won a legal battle to recover £2 billion. The ruling is expected to benefit 200,000 pensioners.

The Court of Appeal yesterday held that National Grid had acted unlawfully in taking £46.3 million in surpluses from the Electricity Supply Pension Scheme in 1992 to pay for voluntary redundancies. A similar ruling was made against National Power.

The case affects the 21 companies in the electricity supply industry and is expected to have implications for other company pension schemes. Many have generated far more money than needed to pay pensioners because investments have done so well.

Traditional "defined benefit" schemes — which pay pensioners about two thirds of final salary — are most likely to be affected. Because of its significance, the case is likely to be appealed to the House of Lords, the court was told.

The two pensioners who brought the case, David Laws, 61, and Reg Mayes, 75, former National Grid workers, criticised the employers' attempt to "drag the process out further" by appeal. They demanded that repayments be made to the funds immediately.

"We are pensioners and we want our money now," Mr Laws said. "The average widow's pension is twenty quid — these people are dying in poverty every year, we can't wait another two years or more while they go to the Lords."

The two men have been trying for six years to have the money returned. They went first to the Pensions Ombudsman, who upheld their case, but the decision was overturned on appeal to the High Court in June 1997.

Gavin Lumsden and Christine Middap on the implications of £2bn victory by retired workers

The pensioners then went to the Court of Appeal, which yesterday ruled that there was no provision in the scheme giving employers a unilateral power to forgo their liabilities to pay contributions.

Lords Justices Nourse, Schiemann and Brooke said that an employer owed an implied obligation of good faith to his employees. "This means that he must not, without reasonable and proper cause, conduct himself in a manner calculated or likely to destroy or seriously damage the relationship of confidence and trust between employer and employee." That obligation included a pension scheme.

The companies had argued that they could correct past overfunding by not paying contributions that had been shown not to be needed.

National Grid said after the case that it was examining the judgment. It would not be known until a court hearing in two months' time how much it would have to repay, and in the meantime it was considering whether to appeal.

Both power companies are confident that they will be able to change the rules of the pension schemes to let them benefit from the surplus money retrospectively.

The pensioners' solicitor, Peter Woods of Stephens Innocent, said that despite the threat of an appeal to the Lords the decision was a "tremendous victory" which promised to lead to increased benefits. The case could have implications for other such funds. "The whole pensions industry is watching this case."

But Dougie Rooney of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, which has 30,000 members in the power industry, said: "This is a disastrous decision.

"It could encourage companies throughout industry to replace occupational schemes with 'money purchase' schemes which leave people worse off."


TOM VICKERS

David Laws celebrating the appeal court decision yesterday after he and Reg Mayes had fought a six-year campaign

BA woman withdraws revenge accusation

By Adrian Lee

A BRITISH Airways manager who claimed that her sacking was motivated by revenge for an office affair withdrew the allegation yesterday.

Joanne Stansfield was accused of lying about Elaine Walker, an airline disciplinary manager who carried out the dismissal last year.

Miss Stansfield, 30, of Windsor, Berkshire, had alleged that her "intimate liaison" with Pat Gaffey, a BA executive and the boyfriend of Miss Walker, played a crucial role. But on the fifth day of an employment tribunal, a lawyer for Miss Stansfield conceded that she could not prove that Miss Walker knew of the relationship when the decision was made.

Miss Stansfield claims she suffered sexual discrimination when she was sacked after a row over overtime while a senior male colleague was given a verbal warning. She was later reinstated at a lower grade.

The tribunal in Croydon, South London, has reserved judgment.

Church upset by voodoo for lovers

By Peter Gleeson

THE Church of England has criticised a men's fragrance company for hiring a "witch doctor" to cast a virility spell over its latest product range.

The voodoo doctor Bishop Lewis will today bless £2 million worth of Lynx's new fragrance, Voodoo, at a dusk ceremony at the company's Leeds headquarters, but a church official described the move as a dangerous publicity stunt.

A spokesman for the Bishop of Ripon, the Right Rev David Young, said: "In general, the Church is concerned that any dabbling with the occult or psychic forces, however bogus, can be disturbing and dangerous. We warn strongly against irresponsible activity of this nature."

Mr Lewis, who was born in Brazil and lives in London, reads shells to "divine the unknown". He said his "come to me" spell using candlelight, mirrors, flowers and soft music will make users of the new fragrance more attractive, virile and better lovers.

He added: "This is not black magic. People criticise black magic, which is about negative prophets of intent. I deal with positives."

A Lynx spokeswoman said that he was not being paid a great deal of money. "He felt that if he asked for a great deal of money, the spirits would be angry and look upon that as being exploitative."

Scientists figure out share madness

By Nigel Hawkes
Science Editor

AS INVESTORS always suspected, the stock market is not the haven of rational analysis that fund managers like to claim. Its wild fluctuations are fuelled by traders who base their investment decisions not on companies' performance but on the behaviour of the market itself.

By looking for price trends and patterns, they help to create a herd instinct which increases the divergences of the market above and below the value it would have in a wholly rational environment.

Thomas Lux, an economist from Bonn University, and Michele Marchesi, an electrical engineer from Cagliari University, applied the methods of statistical physics.

They find that the market's behaviour can be simulated by assuming there are two kinds of players: "fundamentalists", who analyse shares by the underlying performance of a company, and "noise traders", who follow trends.

The two men created a mathematical model in which noise traders can swing between optimism and pessimism. They report in *Nature* that the model predicts a share price which in the long term is close to the valuethat fundamentalists would settle on. But the model can shift abruptly to turbulent behaviour with volatile prices.

Bodice rippers make way for new romantics

Those shortlisted for the genre's biggest honour prefer love less formulaic, writes Dalya Alberge

A FORMER marriage guidance counsellor who was yesterday shortlisted for the Romantic Novelist of the Year award said that some of her clients' tales were too unbelievable even for her genre.

"Fact is more bizarre than fiction," said Helene Wiggin, who was nominated for *In the Heart of the Garden*, a story tracing the history of the millennium through an English country garden and the women who tend it. "There were many stories that you couldn't have put in a book."

Wiggin, who lives in a caravan with her husband and four children in the Yorkshire Dales, spent 12 years as a marriage counsellor. As real-life love is now less bound by convention than it was in the past, she believes that the romance genre is one that should continue to evolve. For her, such novels do not need to end at the altar but depend entirely on "the power of true relationships".

Ms Wiggin, who has also worked as a literacy tutor, said that she had written poems and stories as a child but that an English degree at Leeds had stifled her creativity. Her inspiration returned only years after she graduated.

Other candidates for the award, which will be presented on April 21, include Jessica Stirling (Hugh C. Rae's *nom de plume*), and Zoe Fairbairns, for a book she published after eight years of writer's block.

Ms Fairbains, who believes that her writer's block was brought on by the exhaustion of writing several books in the 1970s and 1980s, today works as a subtitler for television programmes for the deaf. She was picked for *Other Names*, a story set against the world of a "dangerously charming" insurance man who changes the lives of two women.

"I've never ended a book with wedding bells," she said, denying any suggestion that romance has its limits.

People might not think the insurance industry was a romantic subject, she said, "but people in insurance have romances".

Hugh C. Rae, 63, took on a woman's name after switching from crime writing to romance. He has been shortlisted for *The Wind from the Hills*, an epic tale of love, greed and betrayal set on the remote Scottish isle of Mull. Yesterday he said that there was plenty of "sin and suffering" in his books.

The Romantic Novelists' Association says that between 8 and 10 per cent of adults buy at least one romance novel each year, making it the second most popular fiction genre after crime. Most romance readers are women.

The association's research found that "modern women demand modern novels and wedding bells are no longer a prerequisite for a good romantic read".

Angela Arney, chairman of the association, said: "We have come a long way from the point when all romantic fiction involved a swooning virgin and a tall, dark, handsome stranger. Our shortlist this year captures the essence of love in all its contexts. The heroines range from a successful childless thirtysomething to a betrayed widow."

The other writers shortlisted for the award, sponsored by Parker Pens, are Clare Chambers for *Learning to Swim*; Victoria Clayton for *Past Mischief*; Elayn Duffy for *Proud Heart, Fair Lady*; Maeve Haran for *All That She Wants*; and Catherine Jones for *Sisters in Arms*. Last year's winner, Angela Lambert will have a dramatised version of her novel, *Kiss and Kin*, broadcast on Radio 4 on April 17.

STUART CONWAY



Hugh C. Rae, Zoe Fairbairns, Elayn Duffy, Maeve Haran (seated), Victoria Clayton (standing), Clare Chambers, Catherine Jones and Helene Wiggin have been shortlisted for the Romantic Novelist of the Year award

WORDS FROM THE HEART

HELENE WIGGIN: in her 50s, married with four children. Graduated from Leeds University to become a teacher. Worked as a literacy tutor, market trader, café proprietor and health worker.

In the Heart of the Garden

"Something in the night air drew him through the yew arch up the steps to the hidden bower, some wayward spirit urging him onwards to the very place where his heart had been stirred. White flower heads waved like ghosts."

CATHERINE JONES: 43, was in the Army for eight years. Has written one previous novel and a non-fiction guide to being an army wife.

Sisters in Arms

"Predictably, Lizzie was horrified by such a suggestion. 'Edwina, how could you? He's a married man.'

'So? I really can't believe that you are so naive as to think that a wedding ring has ever stopped a man from having sex with someone other than his wife. Why don't you ask Simon? He's bound to know.'"

ZOE FAIRBAIRNS: 52, studied at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. Established a highly successful writing career in the 70s and 80s, then experienced writer's block until now.

Other Names

"He was in his mid-twenties. He wore stripy pyjamas under a rather classy black quilted dressing gown, and he had fallen over his breakfast. In so doing, he had managed to pierce the foil top of the yogurt pot with his big toe."

VICTORIA CLAYTON: 52, read English at Cambridge, her writing talent was revealed when she had two children's novels published when in her early twenties. Has written two novels.

Past Mischief

"I had been standing in the pigeon tower when Jack shot himself. It's the most perfect little octagonal building, two storeys high and fifteenth-century, like our house. I don't suppose I'll ever feel quite the same about it, now. It was a bright October day, with a strong suspicion of chill in the breeze and high, thin clouds."

JESSICA STIRLING: 63, was born in Glasgow, and now lives on the edge of the city. Has enjoyed a sucessful career as a writer. Jessica Stirling's real name is Hugh C. Rae, and she is married and has one daughter who lives in France.

The Wind from the Hills

"He rolled on to his elbow and looked down at her. He still wore his lined tweed waistcoat and flannel shirt, the collar jutting out behind his ear. His face was sleek with perspiration and he smelled, Biddy thought, faintly fishy as if he had been too close to the Dalriada's kipper boxes."

MAEVE HARAN: 43, studied law at Oxford then worked as a journalist. Has three children, and has written five novels.

All That She Wants

"When Henrietta eventually found the perfect man for her friend Fran, she was at a distinct disadvantage. Anyone else lying flat on their back with their feet in the stirrups and their vagina facing due south with a posse of medical students staring up it might have tried to think of other things."

ELAYN DUFFY: 32, has worked in the tourist industry, as an advertising executive and as a market research consultant.

Proud Heart, Fair Lady

"Suddenly he dropped to one knee pressing her hand to his heart. 'I offer you this heart a little battered and unaccustomed to use, but for what it is worth, it will be true and will love you to the end of time and beyond.' Kathryn though she should pinch herself in case she was dreaming, but she didn't, as this was a dream she wanted to continue for the rest of her life."

CLARE CHAMBERS: 32, read English at Oxford. Wrote one novel, then worked as an editor for a London publisher. She has three small children.

Learning to Swim

"Marcus Radley. I had rehearsed this meeting a thousand times in my mind, but in spite of all this preparation failed to deliver any of the brilliant and devastating lines I'd practised over the years. Instead I said 'Hello Marcus,' putting the faintest emphasis on his name and savouring its strangeness."

Viagra takers find short cut to big savings

Patients are buying top strength pills to split in two, reports Ian Murray

IMPOTENCE sufferers have found a way to save money on Viagra. Instead of buying pills with the lowest doses, they are buying the strongest and chopping them up.

The Government has asked GPs not to prescribe the impotence pill on the National Health Service but it is available on private prescription, allowing patients to buy it.

The tablets come in three strengths: 25mg, 50mg and 100mg. Most patients are given the 50mg tablets at first and the doctor then adjusts the dose depending on the effectiveness.

Viagra is normally prescribed in packs of four, regarded by GPs as an adequate month's supply. Stronger tablets cost more. With the chemist's mark-up, a patient will pay about £6.22 per 25mg pill, £7.26 per 50mg pill and £8.80 per 100mg. Big savings can be made by a patient who can obtain larger dose pills to cut up. A 100mg cut in two means a 50mg dose would cost £4.40 — a saving of £2.86. Cut into four for a patient needing only 25mgs, the 100mg pill saves £4.02 per dose.

Doctors should only prescribe pills of the correct strength, but a survey by the GPs' newspaper *Doctor* has found that many GPs who run impotence clinics say they know that dozens of patients are managing to get hold of 100mg pills to dissect, even though they are warned not to.

David Delvin, a Cambridge GP, said he had warned patients cutting 100mg pills into four. "They are not getting an exact dose, but it is the cheapest way of doing it."

A spokesman for Pfizer, the manufacturer, said that the tablets were tested for stability and this could not be guaranteed if the pill was broken up. It was also almost impossible to ensure a correct dose.

He said: "The trouble is the patient has to pay for a consultation, pay for a private prescription and pay an extra 50 per cent on the cost at the chemist. It makes it all very expensive and you can understand why people do it."

The spokesman added: "This practice is potentially dangerous and is the result of government attempts to restrict the use of a drug which is cheaper and more effective than any of its rivals."

He said that some pharmacists might also reduce their mark-up on the stronger pills as a loss leader, hoping to sell tonics and other products to patients with impotence.

Doctors have been issuing private prescriptions for Viagra after government guidance last September not to issue it on the NHS. The British Medical Association has now advised members that they are legally able to prescribe the drug on the NHS despite the government guidance.

They will continue to be able to do so until March 4 when the Government completes a consultation process on new rules that would limit Viagra on the NHS to people with a number of specific conditions or those considered to be in "severe distress".



JOHN STILLWELL

Helen Doman meeting the Prince and Simon Fielding yesterday

Prince shows faith in hands-on method of healing

By Alan Hamilton

THE Prince of Wales, an occasional martyr to the pain of old polo injuries, watched intently as Helen Doman, prostrate on a table, had her slim legs gently pulled, pushed, bent and turned.

"You can see," explained Simon Chesney, the osteopath manipulating the limb, "how the anterior-superior iliac spine is affected; the pelvis is twisting slightly to compensate for the leg." The Prince furrowed his brow. "Oh, I see," he said, plunging his hand into his hip pocket as though he had just felt a twinge of his own.

Mrs Doman, who is in her early forties, suffered a mild attack of polio at the age of three, and has regular osteopathy, without which she said she could never perform her aerobics. Thanks largely to the lobbying of the Prince, a convinced believer in alternative therapies, practitioners now have their own statutory General Osteopathic Council. Yesterday the Prince was opening its new headquarters in South London. By May next year, all practising osteopaths will have to be registered.

The Prince avoided disclosing whether he used osteopaths himself, although he admitted that some of his horses had received their ministrations. He added: "As I have two rapidly growing offspring who are constantly injuring themselves at sport, I am glad there are osteopaths around to help them." He hoped that official recognition of osteopathy by the medical establishment would give enouragement to other alternative therapies that deserved equal status. "There are an awful lot of people out there who would be much better treated by a holistic approach to healthcare."

There are about 3,000 practising osteopaths in Britain. According to the council, they are most frequently consulted for lower back pain, one of the commonest ailments in a species not yet fully evolved to walking on its hind legs. Sports injuries, and whiplash neck injuries from road accidents, are also high on the osteopathic agenda.

Simon Fielding, chairman of the council, said that the Prince had played a key part in helping the profession to become the first of the complementary forms of medicine to be recognised by statutory self-regulation under a 1993 Act of Parliament. "He called all the right people together, from Parliament and orthodox medicine, to convince them that osteopathy was a profession in its own right."

Sterilisation can 'raise CJD risk'

By Nigel Hawkes, science editor

THE way that surgeons sterilise their instruments in British hospitals may increase the risk of spreading new variant CJD, scientists have found.

The discovery will increase pressure on surgeons to use disposable instruments for many operations, despite the extra cost.

The brain protein believed to be responsible for nvCJD is extremely hard to destroy. Conventional sterilisation involves heating instruments to 134 - 138C, quite hot enough to destroy normal pathogens.

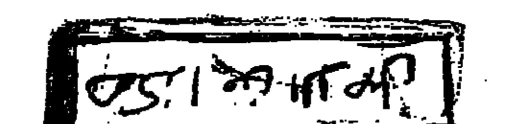
The prion protein not only survives these temperatures but, in some cases, becomes more stable, according to experiments done by David Taylor of the Institute for Animal Health in Edinburgh.

He heated tissue samples for nine, 18 and 30 minutes, to temperatures of 134C and 138C. He found that while the sample treated at 134C did not remain infectious, the one treated at the higher temperature did.

Dr Taylor told *New Scientist* that he believes the higher temperature may "fix" the protein in the abnormal shape which is the hallmark of the disease.

It is known that surgical instruments can pass on CJD. In the 1970s doctors reported that instruments used to study epileptic patients had transmitted the classical version.

Concern has increased since it was shown that the infectious agent is present in the tonsils and other tissues before symptoms of the disease appear. This means that many routine operations could run the risk of transmission.



Bar could pay taxpayer's bill for new QCs

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

BARRISTERS who are promoted to Queen's Counsel are earning an average of nearly £250,000 a year by the time they are appointed.

The selection process can cost the taxpayer £80,000 a year, but costs the successful applicants just £150. However, a question tabled in the Commons by an MP who used to be a solicitor has brought a reply that the system may be changed.

The figures for what barristers earn before being made QCs were released to Andrew Dismore, Labour MP for Hendon. They are bound to fuel the case for the QC selection system to be funded by barristers. At present the lengthy annual selection procedure known as the silk round occupies several months of civil servants' time and is borne by the taxpayer. But earlier this week the Lord Chancellor indicated that he and his Minister of State, Geoff Hoon, wanted to look at recovering the cost of the system from successful applicants. Lord Irvine of Lairg said: "There is an analogy in the way that the civil courts recover their costs through fees charged."

About 10 per cent of the 8,000 barristers in private practice have taken silk. On average barristers apply 2½ times each but some have applied as many as 25 times. Unsuccessful applicants were earning far less on average than successful ones, with average gross earnings of £165,000, confirming the belief at the Bar that earnings are a factor in the chances of success.

Mr Dismore, who used to brief barristers, said that the whole system needed to be made much more transparent so that people knew why they were turned down.

There also needed to be a system of checks on the competence of QCs. "The Bar says this is a kind of Kitemark but there is no way of knowing whether a QC is still up to the mark, no means of appraisal or even an L-plate system. Once appointed, they can go on until they are 90."

More than 100 MPs have signed a motion tabled by Mr Dismore seeking a review of the silks system as part of the present reform of the legal profession.

A spokesman for the Bar said that barristers would be perfectly happy with paying for the Queen's Counsel selection system. "We have suggested this to officials ourselves, some time ago," he added.

FIRST PINOCHET BILL IS £100,000

General Pinochet has run up an initial legal bill to the British taxpayer of more than £100,000, not counting the two hearings before the House of Lords, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has told the Commons. In a parliamentary reply to Cheryl Gillan, Conservative MP for Chesham and Amersham, he said that fees of counsel totalled £123,625, but £18,000 was recoverable under a costs order made against General Pinochet in the High Court, leaving a bill of £105,000 so far. Costs for the House of Lords hearings — estimated to be at least £500,000 each — have yet to be decided. Judgment is expected in two to three weeks time.



TA offers recruits a double life

A recruiting poster similar to a hologram is being launched today as part of a £3 million campaign to try to entice young people into the Territorial Army (Michael Evans writes). People passing the 8ft poster will see the figure change from a building-site worker (top) to a soldier on peace-keeping operations. The posters, by Saatchi & Saatchi, employ a system called lenticular photography in which one image is superimposed on the other. It is thought to be the first time the system has been used on this scale. The TA needs 10,000 recruits each year despite the 25 per cent cut in the force announced last year. MoD sources said the poster aimed to show that TA personnel could find themselves on duties around the world.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Court fight on chemist shop prices

A battle to end price maintenance on over-the-counter branded medicines has been launched in the High Court.

The Office of Fair Trading began a preliminary hearing for the removal of resale price maintenance on common remedies such as painkillers, antiseptics, vitamins, and cough mixtures. The so-called "health tax" is said to cost consumers £300 million a year.

The action is opposed by independent pharmacies, which say that the move would kill off up to a quarter of the 12,000 chemist shops in the country. Branded medicines are the last class of products exempted under the 1964 Resale Prices Acts, which outlawed price fixing.

Union law deal

Free legal services will be offered to the families of 1.3 million public sector workers who are members of Unison, Britain's biggest union. The deal with a personal injuries law firm is the first of its kind by a big trade union.

Yemen caution

British Airways has put off the start of flights to Yemen because of recent kidnappings. The airline stopped flights there in 1994 but hopes to resume them soon. About 35 foreigners have been abducted since early December.

Tracked down

Two thieves who raided a bicycle shop after a snowfall were arrested by police who followed tyre tracks to their home. Peter Darke, owner of the Sunderland shop, said: "I never thought I would be so glad to see a snow shower."

A less des res

An estate agent has begun an inquiry after a newspaper advert for a flat in Nailsea, Somerset, included the warning: "drug dealers next door". Halifax Property Services said: "This is not a description we would let staff use."

Shark surprise

A 7ft mako shark weighing 378lb has been caught in a net off Brighton. The crew of the fishing boat *Catherine Ann* took half an hour to land the fish, which is rare in British waters. The carcass was sold to a French buyer at £3 a kilo.

Line is drawn

A web site for the Welsh assembly launched by Ron Davies, former Welsh Secretary, has been closed after it was bombarded with scurrilous comments. An information-only National Assembly Campaign Website has replaced it.

Transvestite was 'forced to quit jail'

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A PRISON OFFICER who disclosed in a newspaper article that he was a transvestite was forced to resign because his employers were embarrassed, an employment tribunal was told yesterday.

Anthony Jensen-Read is claiming constructive dismissal against the private security firm Premier Prison Services. Mr Jensen-Read, 51, who has been married twice and is a part-time drag performer, told the tribunal in Birmingham: "I was part of a set-up."

The tribunal was told that two women officers had brought sexual harassment claims against Mr Read, and that he had left a prisoner in an insecure van. One woman's complaint was dismissed, but Mr Read was given a written warning after he admitted putting his hands on the waist of the second woman.

Mr Jensen-Read's former supervisor, James Wilson, told the tribunal: "He was one of the hardest working and most conscientious of custody officers employed. He was a willing worker who did many, many hours."

Mr Jensen-Read, from Wolverhampton, said that he was punished for incidents for which other officers would have escaped discipline.

The hearing continues.

Jensen-Read: accused prison firm of a "set-up"

Benefits crackdown on single mothers

By Jill Sherman and Alexandra Frean

SINGLE mothers will have to attend jobcentre interviews shortly after their babies are born or risk losing benefit under proposals in the Welfare Reform Bill published yesterday.

Alistair Darling unveiled what he called "harsh but justifiable" plans to force claimants — for housing benefit, income support, council tax benefit, lone parent benefits and disability benefits — to attend interviews in an attempt to end the "something for nothing" culture.

"There is no unconditional right to benefit," the Social Security Secretary said. "People have a right to expect help to get into work, and security if they cannot. In turn they have a responsibility to take up that help. If you don't turn up you don't get the benefit."

Although he pledged that no single parents or disabled people would be forced to take a job, he admitted that even single mothers of young babies would be required to turn up to discuss job opportunities.

They would then be expected to return for successive interviews at regular intervals if they decided not to take up a job. These interviews would continue at "significant milestones", when for example their child went to primary school. They would be expected to take jobs once their children left school.

Under the Government's New Deal, only lone mothers with children of five and over have to go for job assessment. But under the Welfare Reform Bill the Government has decided to have no minimum age for a first interview.

Mr Darling denied that any mother would be expected to attend the day after a child was born, but said it was "reasonable" to show what was on offer.

The Bill proposes that all benefit claimants must attend interviews within three days of making their first claim. The interview would discuss entitlement, reasons for not working and help in getting a job.

All claimants of working age, apart from lone parents and disabled people, would then be required to take a job within a defined length of time or lose unemployment benefit. The remainder — lone parents and disabled — would be expected to return for repeat interviews.

Labour left-wingers warned the Prime Minister against harassing single parents and disabled people. Lynne Jones, Labour MP for Birmingham Selly Oak, who led last year's Commons revolt over lone parent benefit, said that the new scheme would only be acceptable if it helped people become more independent. "People fear this kind of harassment will be oppressive, particularly to those with mental ill-health or going through a relationship breakdown," she told Radio 4.

Frank Field, who lost his job as Welfare Reform Minister last summer, said that compulsory interviews could simply be a way of "roughing up" claimants unless the scheme was adequately resourced.

The Bill also details:

☐ The introduction of stakeholder pension schemes for middle-to-high earners and a second state pension for low earners to supplement the basic state retirement pension.

☐ The extension of widow's benefit to men. This includes a lump sum of £2,000 and a weekly payment of £85 to those with dependent children.

☐ Divorce reforms to enable women to claim a fair share of their husband's pension.

☐ Reform of benefit for the long-term sick, children and young people.

The Disability Benefits Consortium, which represents 500 organisations, said that the Bill, which will save £750 million, would deny benefits to thousands of people who become disabled in the future.

James Strachan, chief executive of the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, said the government had failed to tackle to real problem facing disabled people.

'This will cause stress to families'

LIZ SEWELL, chief executive of the lone parent support group Gingerbread, said the immediate compulsory interview would cause stress to parents who had been through a traumatic separation.

Maeve Sherlock, director of the National Council for One Parent Families, said the requirement for regular follow-up jobcentre interviews would act as a covert means of putting pressure on them to get a job. "A child who has just lost a parent through divorce, separation or death, may feel desperately let down if the remaining parent suddenly goes out to work all day," she said.

There are 1.7 million lone parents with 2.9 million dependent children. Their average age is 34 and only 3 per cent are in their teens. Around 56 per cent are on benefits. Nearly 30 per cent are divorced, 23 per cent are separated and five per cent are widows. Although 34 per cent are not married, four fifths of these were cohabiting when their children were born.

UNIVERSAL PICTORIAL PRESS



Labour has adopted *All Together Now* by Liverpool group, The Farm, above, as its anthem to woo voters in Scotland

Labour going for song in Scotland

THE MUSICAL battle for the hearts and minds of Scottish voters will be played out between an English football chant and a patriotic pub song (Gillian Harris writes).

Two rousing melodies have been adopted by the Labour Party and the Scottish National Party as anthems for the Scottish elections. Labour hopes that its choice of *All Together Now* by the Liverpool group, The Farm, will convey a strong unionist message while the SNP is convinvced that *Caledonia*, the folk song by Dougie MacLean, will capture the spirit of nationalism.

Both feature a memorable chorus and catchy tune. In a bid to encapsulate pro-union policies, Labour has altered the ten-year-old lyrics of the anthem from "Altogether now in no man's land" to "Altogether now in this land". The chant will be used during party election broadcasts and at rallies featuring parliamentary candidates. The former top ten hit, which is based on Johan Pachelbel's 17th-century Canon and Gigue, has previously been heard on the terraces at Everton and during the 1992 election campaign when Neil Kinnock led Labour to one of its most humiliating defeats.

It was originally written about an incident on Christmas Day in 1914 when British and German troops declared an unoffical ceasefire and left their trenches to exchange gifts, sing carols and play football. Party managers have opted to re-record the song using Glaswegian musicians to give the song a more Scottish feel.

POLITICIANS' HIT PARADE

■ Harold Wilson: *Hello Dolly*, which he adapted to "Hello Harold/It's so good to see you back where you belong".

■ Ronald Reagan: *Born in the USA*, appropriated from Bruce Springsteen.

■ George Bush: *Don't Worry, Be Happy*. Bobby McFerrin, the composer and anti-Republican, threatened to sue.

■ Margaret Thatcher: *It's Great to be Great Again*, commissioned from Andrew Lloyd-Webber.

■ Bill Clinton: *Don't stop thinking about tomorrow*, used with approval of Fleetwood Mac.

Crisis, what crisis? MPs ignore economic woes

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Britain is on the brink of a recession, but you would hardly think so from listening to politicians. On the day when the Bank of England's Quarterly Inflation Report suggested that growth in the first half of this year was "expected to be close to zero", not a single MP raised the outlook for the economy at Prime Minister's Questions.

There was not a word from William Hague — although he attacked tax increases — or anyone else. Later, Francis Maude weighed in with a warning which blamed Labour's higher taxes, penalties for savers, a reckless spending spree and extra burdens on business. Mr Maude has a good point about how the burdens on business may hinder industry's long-term position but, in the short term, he is in danger of repeating the mistake of Gordon Brown when he was Shadow Chancellor of being Mr Doom and Gloom.

While Mr Brown was probably slightly too optimistic over the economy and public spending plans last autumn, Mr Maude's fears then turn out to have been greatly exaggerated. The difference between the Treasury forecast in November of growth of 1 to 1.5 per cent this year and the Bank's latest projection of 0.5 to 1 per cent is not significant in itself, and is consistent with the Treasury's broad view. This does not of itself invalidate Mr Brown's public spending plans. Indeed, the increase in spending, and particularly public investment, planned from April, will offset the weakness of manufacturing and aid recovery.

The Bank's Quarterly Inflation Report, like most outside forecasters, expects the current downturn to be followed by a pick-up in activity in the second half of this year.

The real issue is what happens in 2000 and 2001. Three months ago, the Treasury was forecasting growth of 2.25 and 2.75 per cent in the next two years respectively. That is the crucial period for public spending plans. If the recovery is slower than expected, then there is a risk of public finances deteriorating.

The risks here seem to be mainly on the downside. The Inflation Report highlights a "sharp deterioration" in the global economy since November. Apart from the financial turbulence in Brazil, Japan remains stuck in recession and growth prospects in euroland are continuing to weaken. If the long expansion in the USA ends, the global outlook could become much worse and this could set back British recovery hopes during the run-up to the next election.





Whaling threatens Iceland with ruin

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN REYKJAVIK

THE return of Willy the killer whale to Iceland may save one of Europe's most prosperous nations from bankruptcy.

For as Keiko, the orca's Icelandic name, is trained for release into the Arctic, Icelanders are constantly reminded that whales command fierce passions around the world. The huge tourist interest in Keiko's rehabilitation may just stave off a move that would provoke outrage and a devastating consumer boycott — a resumption of whaling.

This spring the Althing, the country's thousand-year-old parliament, is likely to demand the immediate lifting of the present ban. The Government, which stalled after similar demands last year, may find it harder to delay this time.

Yet if even a single whale is harpooned, Iceland faces ruin. What the Government most fears is reaction in Britain, Germany and America — its leading markets. Despite diversification and the creation of a promising research and high technology market, fish still account for 75 per cent of exports. As one diplomat put it: "No fish — no Iceland."

Icelanders were forced to stop whaling ten years ago by international pressure. But to a nation with a strong sense of history, it is not a commercial operation: it is an affirmation of their traditional way of life.

The Government knows the dangers. David Oddson, the Prime Minister, leads a centre-right coalition that is cruising to a comfortable victory in May's general election. An enviable standard of living has weathered an earlier recession and disposable household income has risen 10 per cent in recent years. The evidence of prosperity is all around — restaurants, fashion boutiques and travel agents promoting Mediterranean holidays.

All could go if the fish market collapses. Every Icelander recalls with a shudder the disappearance of herring stocks in 1967, when overfishing wiped out the livelihood of whole towns and coastal settlements. Thousands were unemployed, hundreds emigrated.

Icelanders argue that the rapidly growing whale population must be culled as it is depleting fish stocks and they would catch only the common minke whales. Diplomats say even that makes no sense: to be commercial, whalers would have to catch at least 100 a year. Iceland could consume only 50, and there is no foreign market: even Japan no longer imports its favourite delicacy.

Tourism is a rapidly growing industry, and more money could be earned from foreigners coming to watch whales gambol at sea. Keiko's arrival from Oregon has sharpened the contradictions. Returning it to the sea will cost more than $2.5 million (£1.52 million).

DON RYAN / AP



Keiko, star of the film *Free Willy*, toying with a live crab in its aquarium pool in Newport, Oregon, before being flown to Iceland

New tax fear over copyright reforms

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

BRITAIN could be forced to impose a special tax on blank tapes and other equipment used for electronic copying under a plan backed yesterday by the European Parliament that seeks to compensate musicians and copyright holders.

A vote by the Parliament considerably toughened a draft directive from the EU Commission that aims to curb the illicit duplication of music, films and other materials using new digital methods.

The commission's draft law allowed copies of texts or recordings to be made for personal use without payment. But the Parliament has insisted that copyright holders must receive "fair compensation".

All EU states except Britain, Ireland and Luxembourg charge levies on blank tapes and discs to cover copyright fees. The law has yet to be considered by ministers, who must take account, but not necessarily adopt, the proposals.

Yeltsin's bad jet day

FROM ALICE LAGNADO IN MOSCOW

A PLANE carrying President Yeltsin collided with an aircraft bearing Massimo D'Alema, the Italian Prime Minister, as it taxied down the runway at Vnukovo-2 airport here on its return from King Hussein's funeral in Amman. The incident has heightened Russians' mirth over their hapless leader.

The Ilyushin 96 took the tail wing off the parked Italian DC9. Another plane had to be flown in to take home Signor D'Alema, who was in Moscow on a working visit.

Moskovsky Komsomolets said yesterday that neither leader knew about Monday's incident until later because the collision was so gentle.

But Russian newspapers had a field day. "Returning from somebody else's funeral, Yeltsin just avoided going to his own," *Moskovsky Komsomolets* said. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* ran a cartoon showing the President wearing wings and about to walk off a cliff. Yevgeni Primakov, the Prime Minister, is standing behind him with a parachute.

A shoddy runway is being blamed. "It's no secret that Vnukovo-2 has been asking for money for repairs for a long time. Now the President has been convinced," said *Kommersant Daily*.

Aids trial ex-minister defies court

Adam Sage in Paris watches a defendant in aggressive, indignant *form at the tainted blood hearing*

THE gulf separating French citizens from the Parisian elite appeared wider than ever yesterday as former ministers began giving evidence in their trial for manslaughter in connection with France's contaminated blood scandal.

For almost an entire day in the witness box, Edmond Hervé, the former Health Minister, was clinical, aggressive and indignant.

He interrupted the presiding judge, slapped down the state prosecutor and repeatedly wagged an admonishing finger at the 70 people in the public gallery.

There was no hint of apology, no sign of modesty and no word for the 4,333 people who contracted Aids in the 1980s after receiving infected blood products.

Le Monde summed up the hearing as "surreal".

M Hervé, 56, is being tried along with the former Prime Minister, Laurent Fabius, 52, and another former Health Minister, Georgina Dufoix, 55, for their alleged failure to ensure the screening and treatment of blood donated by high-risk groups, including prisoners, in 1985.

For a French political class buffeted by corruption scandals but never before called to account in a court of law, yesterday's events were historic - and, in M Hervé's eyes, clearly unacceptable.

M Hervé was Secretary of State for Health from 1983 to 1986, a controversial era in the history of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, which had just been discovered and remained uncharted ground for much of the world's medical profession.

"France acted very quickly" to stem the spread of the HIV virus through blood transfusions, he told the special court which is sitting for the first time, after being set up in 1993 to try ministers for alleged crimes committed while they were in office.

France was the third country in the world to introduce compulsory Aids blood tests on August 1, 1985, aimed at avoiding the infection of haemophiliacs and hospital patients, he said.

The Socialist former minister did nothing to disguise his outrage at being asked to explain how the French authorities made the decisions which led to about 1,000 deaths from Aids.

"I was the conductor . . . not a mere laboratory chief," he told Roger Lucas, the state prosecutor, who repeatedly exclaimed "I'm astonished" when M Hervé admitted to not having been aware of reports by ministry and research officials over whether or not mandatory testing ought to be introduced.

Asked exactly how he delegated authority to his staff, M Hervé remained evasive. He said he "assumed responsibility for my aides", while admitting that discussion at the time on the new disease was "highly technical and I could only refer to advice from the experts".

"I was an active and serious actor in the Government," M Hervé said, swaying forward and stabbing his hands menacingly towards the 12 MPs and three magistrates who will decide whether to send him to prison for up to five years.

"I was at the ministry every week from Tuesday morning to Friday afternoon," he told the court. "It was very rare that I left my office before 11pm. That wasn't a problem because I have a flat on the seventh floor of the ministry."

Behind him, relatives of the seven victims whose complaints sparked the case looked on in silence. On Monday, they had spoken briefly of their loved ones and their anger, before the judge, Christian Le Gunehec, told them that they had no further contribution to make.

Yesterday, M Hervé spoke of "inter-ministerial agreements", "modalities", "methods" and "principles" in a largely uninterrupted, five-hour exposition designed to illustrate his competence.

Everything appeared to have been done to make him feel at home. The special Court of Justice of the Republic is, for instance, sitting in a room at the luxurious International Conference Centre in Paris, decorated in the manner to which the ministers have become accustomed. There is thick blue carpet, delicate lighting, hard wooden desks and a large deferential space between the defendants and their accusors.

"Glacial" was how the Parisian daily *Le Figaro* described the courtroom, which leaves little place for the emotions of France's Aids drama. The same, however, could not be said of the presiding judge's attitude towards the defendants.

Judge Le Gunehec appeared embarrassed at poking his nose into a political world long used to doing what it likes when it likes, and he tried his best to make M Hervé's ordeal as easy as possible.

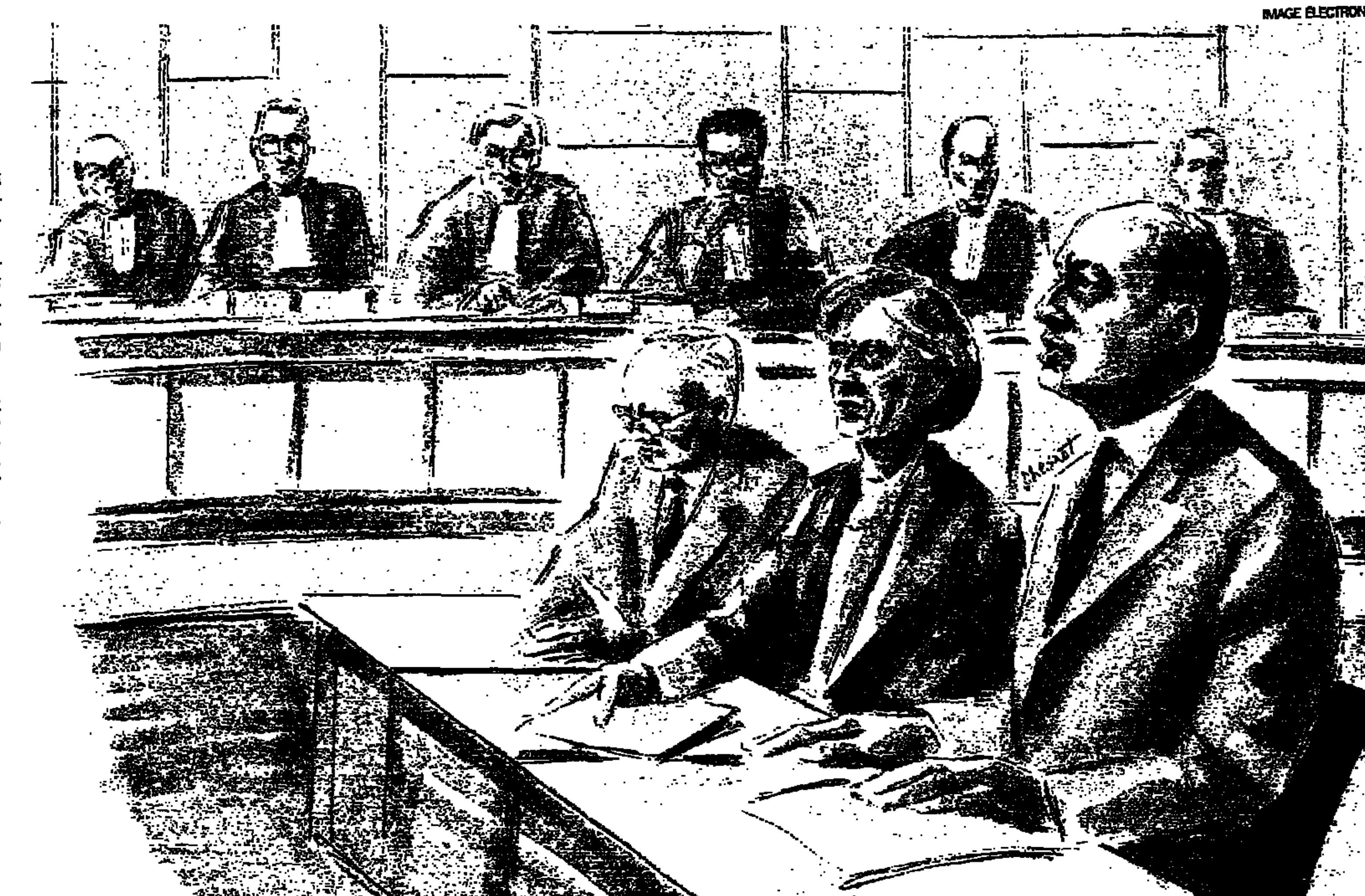
"I want to remind everyone that the defendants are being tried for negligence, not a deliberate criminal action," he said. "Theirs was not a conscious fault but a misjudgment." M Hervé interrupted, his powerful voice echoing off the white walls of the conference centre. "There was no misjudgment," he said. None of the 15 judges contradicted him.

Mr Hervé was later asked why the Government refused to authorise the distribution of an American-made Aids screening test early in 1985, instead giving its approval to a French test that was not ready until several months later.

His reply avoided the question but emphasised the "principles of equality and ethics in which I believe". This drew a strangled cry from the victims' relatives. For a brief moment the technical arguments stopped and the court turned towards the sufferers. But then Judge Le Gunehec spoke: "What I wanted to know ..." he said. "Well, yes, just carry on."

> ‘I was the conductor, not a mere laboratory chief. I was an actor’

IMAGE ELECTRONIQUE



The three accused, former Prime Minister Laurent Fabius, right, Georgina Dufoix and Edmond Hervé in the courtroom in Paris yesterday



Edmond Hervé — "there was no misjudgment"

Briton's 'insult' blamed for lost post

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS AND VERONIQUE PUJOL IN LUXEMBOURG

THE European Commission was justified in dismissing a British official for writing a book critical of monetary union because he had breached Civil Service rules by insulting policies he was employed to promote, the European Court of Justice heard yesterday.

In the Commission's first public defence of its sacking of Bernard Connolly, its lawyers dismissed his claim that he had been punished illegally merely for dissenting from the single currency project in his 1995 book: *The Rotten Heart of Europe: The Dirty War for Europe's Money*.

Mr Connolly, 49, is claiming damages against the Commission for libel and wrongful dismissal from his post as chief of the unit monitoring the exchange-rate mechanism. His book, he maintains, was a loyal attempt to sound the alarm on a project that he believed was harmful to the EU.

The Commission lawyers denounced Mr Connolly's book as a crude polemic that "insulted everything". Even its cover was an offence to the Commission and the EU, they said. This featured the landmark Brussels statue of a boy urinating, with the flow directed at a map of Europe. "This book is a pamphlet, not an economic analysis," said Julian Currall, counsel for the Commission.

Mr Connolly had breached the "obligation of reserve" required of Commission staff and published a book on its policy without permission.

Mr Connolly's lawyers said that the Brussels executive had dismissed him purely because he was "guilty of the public expression of a policy disagreement with the Commission".

The Luxembourg judges are expected to reach a decision in the late spring.

Anatole Kaletsky, page 20



Connolly: claimed he was punished illegally

Reformed rebel turns tide in Iran

Twenty years on, revolution awaits reform, says **Michael Theodoulou**



Barry Rosen left, meets former captor, Abbas Abdi

IT IS difficult to imagine Abbas Abdi, a balding, softly spoken father of five, as the firebrand young revolutionary he was two decades ago when he helped to plan the seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran. But it is not only his appearance that has changed with time.

As Iran marks the twentieth anniversary of its Islamic revolution, Mr Abdi, 42, is one of the former militant students involved in the embassy takeover who are back in the limelight, this time as prominent supporters of the reformist President Khatami.

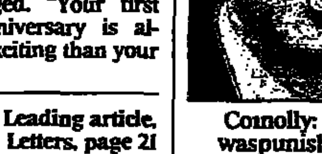
Today, in a sign of the remarkable changes taking place in Iran, it is Mr Abdi and his friends who are the target of hardline fervour for backing improved relations with the United States. He has been in the hardliners' sights since he dared last year to hold an ice-breaking meeting in Paris with Barry Rosen, one of the 52 former American diplomats taken hostage on November 4, 1979, and held for 444 days.

"The conservatives are still very influential," Mr Abdi said. But he was confident Mr Khatami would eventually triumph in his fight against the old guard to liberalise society.

"Freedom was the main slogan of our revolution, but at that time, after 2,500 years of despotism, we had no culture of freedom," Mr Abdi said. "Maybe we needed 20 years to develop it, but it has come with Mr Khatami's election." More than half the population was born since the Shah's fall and do not remember the conditions that ignited the revolution. Preoccupied with having fun, getting a good education or finding work, they show little interest in the official anniversary celebrations.

"That is not surprising," Mr Abdi shrugged. "Your first wedding anniversary is always more exciting than your twentieth."

Leading article, Letters, page 21



Neo-Nazis linked to Freetown rebels

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE United Nations and Western intelligence agencies are investigating *a link* between leading members of South Africa's neo-Nazi movement and President Taylor of Liberia. Together they are suspected of being behind a multinational criminal consortium backing the rebels in Sierra Leone.

According to *Africa Confidential*, an authoritative fortnightly newsletter based in London, officials *monitoring* the arms embargo against Liberia, which is sponsoring rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone, have been taking a close interest in Fred Rundle, a retired South African Army colonel.

Mr Rundle, who is a former spokesman for the far-right Afrikaner Weestandsbeweging (AWB), has close ties with the Liberian leader. Mr Taylor has sent thousands of his fighters to support rebels trying to topple President Kabbah, the newsletter said. The rebels have recently been reinforced by 300 Ukrainian mercenaries and hundreds of soldiers from Burkina Faso.

But the most important change in the effectiveness of the rebels, who last month came close to taking Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, has been an improvement in their tactics and use of weapons.

Intelligence sources said they believe Mr Taylor had set up camps for the rebels and his own men inside Liberia where they were being given training in bush warfare by foreign mercenaries.

"Our suspicion is that these people are probably South Africans," said one intelligence source in West Africa.

Mr Rundle, who has had extensive business dealings with Mr Taylor, has made several trips to Liberia recently and is involved in mining operations close to the border with Sierra Leone. *The motives of the* rebels of the Revolutionary United Front trying to bring down Mr Kabbah's elected Government in Sierra Leone have been obscure for years.

The huge profits from the country's diamond mines is a key factor for the backers and organisers of the rebels. Sierra Leone's gems are estimated to be worth £100 million a year *to groups which control the* diamond-producing areas in the west, now under the sway of the rebels.

Mr Rundle's partner, Nico Shefer, who was born in Ecuador and was once in business with the late Pablo Escobar, the notorious Colombian drugs baron, has also been seen with Mr Taylor and Mr Rundle during visits to Liberia in recent weeks, *Africa Confidential* reported. Mr Shefer played a key role in Mr Taylor's 1997 election win after years of civil war.

Letters, page 21

Sale of ivory stirs poaching fears

FROM SAM KILEY IN JOHANNESBURG

THE United Nations decision to allow three Southern African countries to sell £60 million of stockpiled elephant ivory was condemned yesterday by Kenya's leading conservationist, Richard Leakey.

Dr Leakey, director of Kenya Wildlife Services, said the decision by the board of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) to allow Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia to go ahead with the one-off sale of their ivory inventory to Japan was "a total violation of the agreements reached the year before last at the Cites meeting in Harare." He said that the board had reluctantly agreed to the sale, "provided there was a monitoring system in place to assess whether the sale caused an increase in poaching". But, he added, "that system is nowhere near in place and will probably take two years to set up".

The three countries have lobbied for a partial lifting of the moratorium on ivory sales because they say that their elephant populations are too large and are destroying their own environments. They have pledged to use ivory revenues to fund conservation projects.

LOUIS VOSLOO / REUTERS





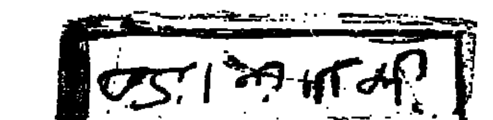
Helicopter plunge from roof kills four

A helicopter crashes on top of a building, left, in the centre of Cape Town yesterday. A moment later it exploded in flames, killing all four people on board.

Mark Romburg, a South African police spokesman, said: "The helicopter was dropping off an air conditioner. Its tail rotor hit a sign and *it crashed. All four occupants* are dead."

Firemen, above, managed to put out the blaze on top of the building where the Russian-built Mi8 helicopter crashed at 6.25am, just before the morning rush hour and opposite one of the city's luxury hotels. "All of a sudden the back rotor struck the sign at the side of the building," Jimmy Austen, who saw the crash from his hotel room, said. "The helicopter then spun around . . . and plummeted into the top of the building and burst into flames."

One of the rotor blades lay in the road below, and debris from the crash flew across the street, damaging two rooms at the hotel. But none of the occupants was injured, police said. *(Reuters)*



Triumph for a love forbidden by Hitler

Tony Paterson in Berlin reports on the true romance behind a film billed as the successor to Schindler's List

THE triumph of lesbian love over Nazi barbarism is the theme of a new German film, telling the extraordinary true story of a forbidden relationship during the Third Reich, which opened the 49th Berlin Film Festival yesterday.

The film, *Aimée and Jaguar*, by Max Färberböck, an award-winning television director, has already received a welter of advance publicity and seems likely to follow *Steven Spielberg's epic Schindler's List* as a cinematic example of an individual German's struggle to defy the inhumanity of the Hitler era against all the odds.

The film sticks closely to the life story of Lilly Wust, now 85, who in 1942 was one of the millions of ordinary German housewives so captivated by Nazi ideals that she was awarded the Mother's Cross medal for bearing four Aryan sons and was reputedly not averse to making comments such as "the Jews are the cause of all our ills — I can smell them a mile off".

That was until Frau Wust, then aged 28, played in the film by the actress Juliane Köhler, bumped into the woman who was to change her life in a café next to Berlin's Zoo station — opposite the venue at which yesterday's film festival ceremonies took place.

Frau Wust met and fell in love with one whom, in Nazi terms, would have amounted to her reviled opposite: a 20-year-old chainsmoking Jewish lesbian named Felice Schragenheim, a relative of Leon Feuchtwanger, a writer who was on the run from the Gestapo.

"No man had been capable of making me experience the emotional storm that I was plunged into through this curious girl," Frau Wust recalls.

After discovering that her lover was Jewish, Frau Wust divorced her Nazi husband and underwent an ideological conversion that turned her into an ardent defender of persecuted Jews.

Adopting the nicknames Aimée and Jaguar, Lilly and Felice, who is played by the actress Maria Schrader, embarked on a tempestuous love affair that was brought to a tragic end 12 months later.

Following the German Army's defeat at Stalingrad in early 1943, the Nazis launched a campaign to render Berlin completely "Jew free". The remaining 7,000 Jews in the German capital were deported to concentration camps. Felice Schragenheim was picked up by the Gestapo on August 21, only hours after the couple had returned from a swimming trip. One of the few remaining photographs of the pair shows them on that day, clad in wartime bathing garb on the banks of Berlin's River Havel.

In desperation, Frau Wust travelled to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in what was then Czechoslovakia to beg for her lover's release. Her pleas went unheard and Felice was sent on to the death camp at Gross Rosen where she was murdered.

Responding to the praise that has already been heaped on the film, Herr Färberböck said yesterday that his work was important because it provided a view of the Nazi era that "differs completely from the standard cliches about the period".

Mrs Wust, who was honoured by Bonn in 1981, said yesterday that *Aimée and Jaguar* was an important film because it was a living tribute to her former lover, "this unique person Felice".

LINKS

www.berlinale.de/english.html — Website for Berlin Film Fest

www.german-cinema.de/archive/a/aimee_E.html — Website giving details of the film

www.filmfestivals.com/ — Website listing all film festivals



Lilly Wust, flanked by the actresses Maria Schrader, left, and Juliane Köhler at the Berlin Film Festival

Royals run from Olympic scandal

FROM GILES TREMLETT IN MADRID



EUROPE'S royal families have started to distance themselves from the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The crown princes of Spain and The Netherlands have turned their backs on the organisation, which is being swamped by bribery scandals.

Crown Prince Willem-Alexander of The Netherlands has suspended his membership of the committee and said he would withdraw if Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC's President, failed to clean up the organisation.

The Spanish Government has advised Crown Prince Felipe, 31, that now is not the time to take up an offer of IOC membership.

Prince Willem-Alexander is one of six European royals who are members of the 114-strong committee. The Princess Royal is the most prominent.

Prince Albert of Monaco and princes or princesses from Belgium, Luxembourg and Lichtenstein are also members, as is Prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia.

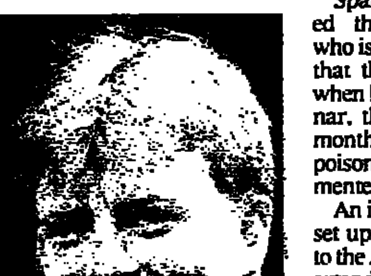
None of the royal IOC members has been accused of taking bribes, but there are concerns about the wisdom of belonging to an organisation in which one in five members is accused of corrupt or unethical behaviour.

Wim Kok, the Dutch Prime Minister, said Prince Willem-Alexander would await a March meeting of the committee before deciding. "The special sitting of the IOC will have to clarify whether the organisation has the power to clean up its act, and is therefore crucial for the question of whether the Prince of Orange will be able to continue," Mr Kok said.

Abel Matutes, the Spanish Foreign Minister, admitted that the Government and Spanish Royal Family had been considering the possibility of Prince Felipe joining. But he said the Government had decided this was not the right time for the Prince, a former Olympic yachtsman, to join. "It is something to think about, but only in the long term," he said.

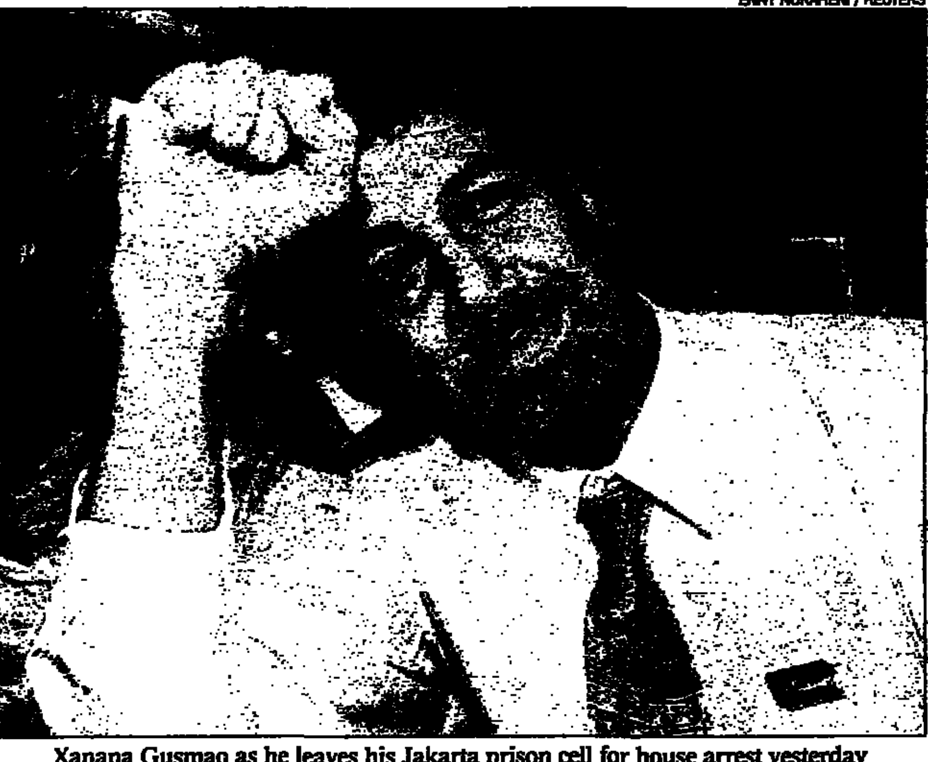
Spanish newspapers reported that Señor Samaranch, who is Spanish, had suggested that the Prince join the IOC when he visited José Maria Aznar, the Prime Minister, last month. "It could prove to be a poisoned gift," *El Mundo* commented.

An independent ethics panel set up by Salt Lake City, host to the 2002 Winter Games, has extended allegations of unethical behaviour to nine more IOC members. Twenty per cent of IOC members now stand accused of taking bribes from candidate cities. Fourteen members have resigned, been suspended or are under investigation by the IOC itself.



Willem-Alexander: said he may leave the IOC

ENNY NURAHENI / REUTERS



Xanana Gusmao as he leaves his Jakarta prison cell for house arrest yesterday

Timor rebel to join talks

FROM PATRICIA NUNAN IN JAKARTA

INDONESIA moved Xanana Gusmao, the East Timorese independence leader, from prison to house arrest yesterday so that he can play a key role in shaping the future of the disputed territory.

A few dozen supporters cheered as the 52-year-old rebel leader left Jakarta's Cipinang prison, where he was serving a 20-year term for armed rebellion. Mr Gusmao was initially sentenced to death by a court in Dili, the East Timor capital, in 1992.

About 50 journalists in cars and on motorcycles gave chase as Mr Gusmao was driven to a house behind Jakarta's Salemba prison where the Indonesian Justice Minister, Muladi, welcomed him. He said: "Xanana is here to help solve the problem of East Timor." Mr Gusmao said: "I feel I have been given a very heavy task and I have to do it ... with talks with all sides I can create an East Timorese nation."

Speaking of his new accommodation, a four-bedroom house, Mr Gusmao said: "It's more convenient for meeting other leaders." His wife and son remain in Australia.

WORLD IN BRIEF

280 feared lost in Borneo sinking

Jakarta: At least 280 people are missing — many of them feared dead — after an Indonesian ship with more than 300 on board sank off Borneo, a port official reported. He added that a passing cargo ship had rescued 19 people over two days in bad weather after Saturday's accident, but the rest were still unaccounted for. It was hoped that some of those missing had made it to the shore, either by swimming or clinging to drums or planks. The *Harta Rimba* sank between Tambelan and Pengiki islands, 124 miles northwest of Pontianak, apparently after pumps failed. Most of her passengers were workers for a logging company. *(AFP)*

Ethiopia expels envoy

Addis Ababa: Ethiopia ordered the Eritrean Ambassador to leave within 24 hours as intensive fighting along their joint border continued for a fifth day (Robin Lodge writes). Diplomats said that the expulsion closed one of the last channels for a negotiated settlement. Since the renewal of last year's hostilities, each country has accused the other of lying to convince the world that *it is the victim of unprovoked aggression.*

Anwar media blackout

Kuala Lumpur: The media were banned from reporting the trial of Anwar Ibrahim, the former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, for the second time in the three-month hearing (David Watts writes). Judge Augustine Paul declared that defence evidence on conversations between Mr Anwar and Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister, was hearsay.

Record jail term ends

Rafah, Egypt: Mahmud Sawarka, 69, the longest-held Arab prisoner in Israeli jails, returned home to a hero's welcome after a 22-year detention in the Jewish state. Nicknamed the Mandela of Egypt, Mr Sawarka was arrested in 1977 and received a 45-year sentence for attacking Israeli soldiers in the Sinai, leaving one dead, when the peninsula was under Israeli occupation. *(AFP)*

Senate poised to end Clinton agony

By Damian Whitworth in Washington

THE impeachment trial of President Clinton could end tonight as weary senators inch towards voting to acquit him of high crimes and misdemeanours.

The Senate was deliberating on the charges of perjury and obstruction of justice last night and Trent Lott, the Republican Majority Leader, hoped that he would be able to conclude the proceedings swiftly.

With the certainty that 67 of the 100 senators will not vote to convict Mr Clinton, only two questions remained: would the prosecuting Republican House of Representatives be humiliated by failing to get even a symbolic simple majority on the charges? And would any censure motion then be passed?

Some of the 55 Republicans in the Senate are unconvinced by the charge that Mr Clinton lied under oath about his affair with Monica Lewinsky. And even if he did, they are unsure if the action rises to the level of a high crime.

Democrats, keen to rebuke the President for his behaviour, saw the likelihood of a stiff censure motion dwindle because those Republicans who believe it is unconstitutional said that they would throw procedural hurdles in its path. If such a motion is not passed straight after the trial the momentum is likely to disappear during next week's Senate holiday.

More details began to emerge last night of an inquiry into Kenneth Starr's investigation.

Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, is planning to study the way that the independent prosecutor asked to expand his Whitewater inquiry to include the Lewinsky affair.

There have been suggestions of improper contacts with Paula Jones's lawyers.

America's sex life goes west

Contrary to Hollywood myth, many in the US have difficulties in bed, writes Giles Whittell in Los Angeles

UNIVERSAL PICTORIAL PRESS



Meg Ryan and Billy Crystal in a scene from *When Harry Met Sally*. Their restaurant scene offered a generation a sex soundtrack to aim for

SO MUCH for the sexual revolution. Half a century after the ground-breaking *Kinsey Report* transformed American attitudes to sex, nearly half the country's women and almost a third of its men still experience regular sexual problems that amount to "a significant public health concern", according to a new study published yesterday.

An alarming 43 per cent of women feel pain, anxiety or a conspicuous lack of pleasure during sex, a team of academics reported in the *Journal of the American Medicine Association*. Their exhaustive survey shatters several myths — including that of the sexually repressed bluestocking — and suggests that the country's vast culture of sexual fantasy remains as remote as ever from reality.

Men seem to have more fun in bed, but not by much. Problems ranging from premature ejaculation to poor erections were reported by 31 per cent of them — a figure considered the tip of an iceberg whose true scale is reflected by the rush for anti-impotence drugs. The report "gives us a base for explaining why we had this enormous response to Viagra", its principal author, Dr Edward Laumann, said.

Dr Laumann launched the study, expecting overall dysfunction rates of about 20 per cent for men and women. "The rates are far higher than anyone had really expected," he said, adding that they should give hope for millions who thought they had been suffering alone.

Based on 90-minute interviews with 1,749 women and 1,410 men, the survey's most striking results concerned women aged 18 to 29, a group endlessly targeted by soft focus Hollywood romances and increasingly sex-driven glossy magazines. About 26 per cent of them said they regularly failed to achieve orgasm, 27 per cent said sex brought no real pleasure, and 32 per cent said it did not interest them.

Sex for the group that provides most of the world's pinups is too often stressful, unfulfilling or plain boring, the researchers found. It is certainly a far cry from the moaning ecstasy delivered on cue in *When Harry Met Sally* by Meg Ryan. Her famous restaurant scene opposite Billy Crystal offered an entire generation a sex soundtrack to aim for, while warning men that it was seldom real.

Crystal and his age-group have plenty of frustrations of their own. Men aged between 50 and 59 were three times as likely to report difficulty getting and maintaining erections than were men in their twenties, the report found, even though fewer than one in ten men said they derived no pleasure from sex.

The result is a scientifically proven mismatch between women in their twenties and men in their fifties — precisely the sort of coupling Hollywood so often offers. Warren Beatty and Halle Berry in *Bulworth* and Michael Douglas opposite Gwyneth Paltrow in *A Perfect Murder* are but two recent examples.

"These are the people who would be least likely to do well together," Debra Haffner, of the New York-based Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, said yesterday. Such films, along with the saturation of sexual content in other media, give Americans "a pseudo-sense that we know a lot about sexuality", Ms Haffner said.

"In America everyone thinks everyone else is having better, hotter and more frequent sex than you are. And as long as you feel you're the only one, it's very hard to take the plunge and go to a library or doctor for more information. This report lets you know you are not alone."

Stress, overwork and money problems were linked consistently to unhappy sex lives, though the report emphasised it was unclear which came first. However, two factors behind better sex did emerge.

Remarkably, unmarried women were 50 per cent more likely than married ones to report problems having orgasms, while men and women without high school diplomas reported higher levels of sexual dysfunction than those who completed school. Going to college is even better for one's sex life, it appears. Men with degrees reported a far lower incidence of premature ejaculation that those without.

Women in their twenties who are miserable about sex have grounds for hope, according to the report. Unlike men, for whom middle age brings the spectre of impotence, women in their fifties reported less pain and more pleasure during sex than those still experimenting with partners and intercourse in general. "For women, age is not the big deal everyone assumes it is," Dr Laumann said.

The report is certain to keep the country's cultural commentators busy for months, not least as a powerful argument for adult sex education.

"American sex education is aimed exclusively at teenagers and is best described as organ recitals and disaster prevention," Ms Haffner said.

"Kids are told about their tubes, and about the dangers of Aids and sexually transmitted diseases. But how to be in love, have an intimate relationship or simply have sex does not come up. Even if we did a better job for teenagers there is nothing out there for adults."



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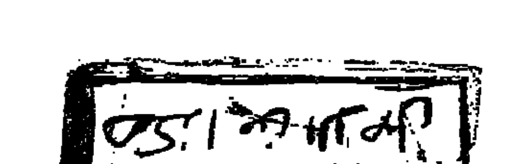
Halle Berry and Warren Beatty, who star in *Bulworth*

Children haunted by divorce

YOUNGSTERS whose parents divorce are more likely as adults to suffer mental health problems such as schizophrenia or depression, an Israeli study has found (Ross Dunn writes).

Researchers at the psychiatric department of Hadassah University, Jerusalem, found the chances of developing clinical depression as an adult are up to three or four times higher among those whose parents divorced before they reach the age of nine than among those whose parents stay together.

The study of hundreds of mental health patients suggested that there was a biological factor, perhaps a genetic disposition — possibly involving hormones — that could trigger depression in adulthood when an environmental factor such as permanent separation from a parent happens during childhood.



Leaders on the diabetes battlefront



Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on pancreatic transplants; the timing of King Hussein's death; St Valentine's obscure role as patron saint of epileptics; why the whole community should be vaccinated against meningitis; and the Bristol Cancer Help Centre

It is paradoxical that in many countries in Europe where it would be unwise to risk diluting whisky with the local water, the long-term survival rate after treatment for most, if not all, of the major cancers is better than in Britain. So used are we to reading statistics such as these, produced by the *European Journal of Cancer*, which show that our record only just beats Slovenia and Estonia and is worse than all other Western European countries, that we forget that we still lead the world in other branches of medicine.

Diabetes is the main cause of kidney failure and blindness in adults and a common cause of heart and arterial disease. It leads to more cases of amputation and impotence than any other condition.

In many patients diabetes is diagnosed early and is well controlled by medication. There is, however, a group of insulin-dependent diabetics whose disease defies the best-planned and most carefully executed management. The high levels of sugar in the blood, which are a feature of poorly controlled insulin-dependent diabetes, result in damage to the small blood vessels. It is these diseased blood vessels which produce the complications of a harmed retina and blindness, malfunctioning kidneys and renal failure, and the impairment of the nervous system which, together with arterial damage, causes impotence and bloodless feet.

> Blood sugar is steady before they leave the theatre

As diabetes is the result of failure of the islets of Langerhans, which produce insulin in the pancreas, the obvious treatment would seem to be pancreatic transplants. These have been carried out in Minneapolis since 1965. Initially the outlook for the patients was not good, but some survived and one patient is still alive at least 25 years later.

As surgical techniques and knowledge about immuno-suppression (to prevent the body rejecting the new pancreas) improved, the results became better and better. Soon after the pioneering work in Minneapolis, about a dozen people underwent pancreatic transplantation in Britain but all died and, not unnaturally, the operation fell into disfavour.

However, work went on both in Minneapolis and elsewhere, and one young British surgeon, Mr Nadey Hakim, went to America for more than five years of training in transplant surgery at Minneapolis, Johns Hopkins, and at the Mayo Clinic. He learnt, among other transplant techniques, the difficult art of transplanting the pancreas.

Mr Hakim is now the surgical director of the transplant unit at St Mary's Hospital, London, where he started a British pancreatic transplant programme less than five years ago.

Results at St Mary's are now as good as those in Minneapolis and better than anywhere else in Europe. In 80 per cent of those operated on, the new pancreas survives and the patient's diabetes is perfectly controlled.

So rapid is the improvement that although patients come into the operating theatre with sky-high blood sugar levels, these are absolutely normal and steady before they leave the theatre — even before their abdomen has been closed.

Unfortunately, many poorly controlled diabetic patients have had their disease for so long that their kidneys have already suffered severely. This does not necessarily daunt the transplant team, who can do a simultaneous pancreatic and kidney transplant — in fact, the operation is done so often that it is now familiarly known as an "SPK".

Likewise, if a patient receives only a pancreas, the operation is known as a "PTA" (pancreas transplant alone).

Another group of patients who have previously had a kidney transplant but with the root cause of their trouble — the unstable diabetes — uncured, have what is termed a "PAK" (pancreas after kidney) transplant.

YOUSEF ALLAN / AP



It is thought that King Hussein became chilled by his wet drive through Amman, which decreased his resistance

How the rain caused a fatal chill

THE LATE King Hussein of Jordan's triumphant return to Amman, apparently in remission, brought relief to his many admirers outside, as well as within, his kingdom. No group was more surprised than the doctors when he had to make a rapid return to the Mayo Clinic.

It soon became clear that, however exuberant he had seemed in the drive through his rain-soaked capital, he was dying. As a last resort, another bone-marrow transplant from his sister was attempted but his body could cope no more and the graft was rejected. Although his sister was a suitable donor in terms of tissue-type cross-matching, she is middle-aged. Bone-marrow transplants work better from young donors. The questions the doctors asked was whether the King's health, although apparently relatively good, was already failing when he returned to Jordan or whether the trip was only to achieve political ends.

It was known that sooner or later the King would develop complications from his non-Hodgkin's lymphoma but death was not thought to be imminent. The explanation given is that it was the rain, and his soaking, which hastened his end. The suggestion is that he became chilled, which reduced his resistance — he was already on powerful immuno-suppressant drugs to protect an earlier bone-marrow transplant — and that an intercurrent organism lurking harmlessly in his body caused an overwhelming infection. In his weakened state, and with a high fever, the new transplant didn't help, and King Hussein lapsed into multi-systems failure.

Thunderbolts and flashes

A STUDY on the effects of the calendar on Britain's sex life suggests that Cupid is busier at the Christmas office party than on Valentine's Day.

February 14 doesn't figure as a significant factor in the report by Kaye Wellings, of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, published in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*. The UK birth rate, particularly — but not entirely — in unmarried women, rises in September, 40 weeks after the Christmas party season. The number of abortions, and those seeking HIV tests, is greatest in the first quarter. Condom sales also peak just before Christmas. On the Continent, where New Year's Eve is the height of the festive season, the birth rate peaks in October.

As well as looking after lovers, St Valentine is also the patron saint of those with epilepsy. He was no doubt on the alert when the Prince of Wales and Camilla Parker Bowles recently left the Ritz together. So unremitting were the flashes from the photographers' cameras that television companies felt it unwise to broadcast pictures for fear of inducing epileptic seizures. Professor Colin Binnie of the Institute of Epileptology at King's College London has studied the effect of intermittent flashing lights on the brain. In 1997, when the baddies were zapping the goodies with their laser guns in the TV programme *Pocket Monsters*, the deep red of the flashes induced seizures in 700 people, mainly children, in Japan.

The colour of the flash is all-important as the brain recognises differences in colour through the cells, rods and cones at the back of the eye. Reds induce seizures 100 times more readily than white light, and few reds are deeper than that on the TV screen. The interval between flashes also matters; 15 frames per second is the most dangerous. Although boys watch more TV and play more video games than girls, it is twice as easy to induce a fit in females. There are no racial differences, although sub-Saharan Africans appear less susceptible. Whatever the nationality, the risk is reduced by watching TV in a well-lit room, having a 100Hz set and avoiding programmes with lots of flashes. (If you must watch them, do so with one eye covered.)



St Valentine has a dual role

In France, seizures have been induced by shafts of light from the red evening sun shining through trees along roads and striking a driver's face. Farther afield, they have been triggered by flashes of light through the pillars of the Sydney harbour bridge.

The 17th-century herbalist Nicholas Culpeper recommended lilies for the "falling sickness"; probably he didn't distinguish simple faints from seizures. Professor Binnie has modern treatment available but in order that his research may continue, the Halifax building society is selling lilies of the valley in its branches this month in aid of the Institute of Epileptology.

Meningitis: vaccinate the community

PARENTS in Pontypridd, where there have been 11 cases of meningitis Group C in the area, seven from three schools, are bound to question whether the situation would have been different if preventive antibiotics and vaccination had been used earlier on a wider population. Others question whether the present protocol for treating meningitis is too rigid and limited and whether we make adequate use of the vaccine already available against meningitis Group C. In a slightly earlier age, we would not have considered that a vaccine, which offers protection for "only a few years" excluded its use. If the then Departments of Health had adopted a similarly stringent line, many infectious diseases would have continued to run rampant.

Boosters for one injection or another were part of life in the Forties and Fifties. Since meningitis Group C has a predilection for adolescents, it is hard to understand why, when there is an outbreak, the whole community isn't vaccinated.

A few years ago, when Uganda suffered an outbreak, the Danes were universally acclaimed for their generosity and foresight in providing blanket immunisation. If progress into research for a longer-acting vaccine continues at the same pace, if vaccinated, today's adolescents would then be covered until it became available. There is an argument for vaccinating adolescents at school. Adolescent life is a risky time for meningitis as they live a close, hugger-mugger community life in the classroom and as weekend clubbers. Ecstasy-taking isn't the only dangerous habit, kissing carries its own hazards. Meningitis C lives in the back of the throat and mouth and is spread through coughs, sneezes and kissing. It frequently coincides with a flu outbreak, possibly because the resistance of the vulnerable is reduced, possibly because of the increase in coughing and sneezing. Teenagers would be well advised to enjoy party-free nights for a week or two.

Death of a cancer pioneer

THE Bristol Cancer Help Centre presents a facet of medicine that is acceptable to all but the most traditional doctors. It, arguably more than any other centre, has established an understanding that complementary medicine — under which patients may receive the various therapies they offer with their doctor's blessing, given in the knowledge that chemotherapy will not be replaced by organically grown vegetables — is different from alternative medicine.

Penny Brohn, who in 1980 founded the centre along with her husband David, Canon Christopher and Pat Pilkington, died last Wednesday. She had been suffering from breast cancer since October 1979. Six years ago, after some intense campaigning on behalf of the clinic in the face of a, statistically, unjustified attack, the cancer recurred. Yet she had illustrated one of the tenets of the centre: that a big part of the battle against cancer is to establish a good lifestyle and an easy mind.

The centre teaches better than anywhere the value of holistic medicine, appreciation of the person as an individual and the merits of treating mind, body and spirit as an interdependent triad. The style of medicine bears some relation to that practised by my grandfather. A difference is that conventional medicine offers effective treatment for the body that can be complemented by proper nutrition, reappraisal of lifestyle and spiritual and emotional support. A new self-help pack, £25, or more information is available from the centre: 0117-980 9500.

'We're more like friends — after all, looks don't last for ever'

Victoria Adams and David Beckham on tears, telly and babies. Exclusive interview by Christa D'Souza, of Vogue



JUERGEN TELLER VOGUE/THE CONDE NAST PUBLICATIONS LTD



So young, so in love: David Beckham and Victoria Adams are the most glamorous parents-to-be in Britain, but they say they are determined to be just an ordinary mum and dad

The three of us have arranged to meet in the lobby of the Midland Hotel in Manchester. They look surprisingly conspicuous for two so paranoid about security, dressed in matching white Polo Sport jackets, matching Stüssey baseball caps and clinging onto each other so tightly you'd think pregnant Victoria was about to deliver her baby right then and there.

"Yeah, we feel like two kids coming in here in our jeans and our Puffas when everybody else looks so grown-up and posh, don't we David?" says Victoria in her small, diamond-hard voice, taking a dainty sip from the two Diet Cokes she has ordered. "Yeah, we do," agrees David shyly, as he takes his silver Nokia out of his pocket and places it prominently on the table.

Overgrown kids is exactly what Victoria Adams, 24, and David Beckham, 23, are and it's difficult not to feel a wave of affection at the thought of them carefully laying out the tabloids every morning to see which ones their pictures are in and discussing who is more famous: "He gets more respect because he is considered more talented," Victoria concludes.

> 'We feel like kids when everybody else is so grown-up'

But the most touching image is of this sublimely handsome young lad, sitting in his dressing-room at home wondering which of the hundreds of brand-new outfits staring at him from the rails he should put on in the morning. According to his fiancée, he's paranoid about his appearance. "I always tell him he looks lovely," explains Victoria.

Let's not forget, though, that the pair of them haven't lived this curious fishbowl existence for very long. It wasn't so long ago that Posh and Geri (yes, they made up and, yes, she'll be invited to their wedding) were living with the rest of the girls in Maidenhead in a house so tiny that Victoria had to share a room with Emma and Geri had to sleep in a cupboard.

Less than three years later and Victoria earns £80,000 a week and David makes about £20,000. Together they are probably worth in the region of £18 million. One of the more endearing things about the pair of them is that although they've worked hard to get there, they act as if they'd won their fortunes in the Lottery. Well, David does.

"It's the one thing David and I differ on," says Victoria. "He never looks at the price of anything, do you? But I'm not going to be a nagging bag. I'm here to make him happy."

One thing is certain: they are completely, utterly, unconditionally mad for each other. A goofy smile of compliance spreads across David's picture-perfect features whenever his fiancée asks him one of her *rhetorical* questions. Victoria, meanwhile, perpetually strokes and pats David with her babyish, stick-on French manicured fingers.

I assume she's being serious when she says she almost *had the builders* put side-by-side lavatories in the master bedroom. "I've weed in front of David right from the beginning," she shrugs, "but then we've always been more like friends. Well, looks aren't going to last for ever, are they?"

Indeed, it's hard to imagine how David would have survived without her support after that red card incident at last year's World Cup. Beckham admits to weeping only twice during the furore — when he saw his parents straight afterwards and when he met Victoria in New York. Of course, it still hurts — especially the taunts of TV presenter Jeremy Clarkson, who would apparently like to get the Manchester United midfielder alone in a padded cell with a baseball bat. "A lot of people would have topped themselves over that," Victoria says thoughtfully, and then leans over her bump to give David yet another hug. "But *don't worry, I'll look after you.* Just send him round here. *I'll* beat him up ..."

Love developed quickly, very quickly — and so did the baby. It wasn't easy at first, says Victoria, what with it not being planned, and being on tour in America, and perpetually having to vomit into a bucket at the side of the stage.

Now life's as cosy and nest-like as it can be. Victoria sees few people besides her family and spends most evenings curled up with David on the sofa in their newly decorated pad — described by her as "a cross between a poof's house and a whore's house" — watching their favourite TV show, *Friends*. By day they shop or take gentle strolls with their matching rottweilers Puffy and Snoop Doggy Dogg.

Sometimes the couple even brave their local branch of Tesco. "It's fine. They're very posh round where we live," explains Victoria. "If anyone wants an autograph I say 'Not until we've *finished*' and then I get all the children to line up and tell them that if they don't say please they're not going to get one. David and I were talking about this the other day, weren't we? We want children who are very well behaved."

Who knows what their baby — *who is to be delivered this month* at the Portland Hospital in Central London — will be like? In any event, he or she will have an utterly devoted Mummy and Daddy — particularly Daddy, who admits that he'd like to have six children and drive all of them around in his Bentley Arnage — and will want for nothing. Except, perhaps, a nanny, since Victoria and David, amazingly, have decided they are going to do all the child-rearing on their own, just like normal people, with help when they need it from Victoria's mum, Jacqui.

"But, then, I have the kind of job where I can do that," says Victoria. "I'll just take it into *the studio with me in* a backpack."

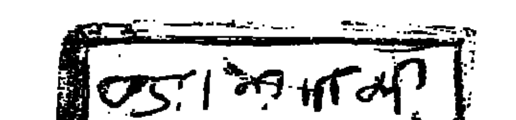
And nights? "Oh, straight in a cot, because you have to draw the line somewhere," she says briskly, adding with an uncharacteristic question mark in her voice, "although I *have* heard there are some babies who never sleep ... aren't there?"

● *Christa D'Souza. Copyright Vogue/The Condé Nast Publications Ltd. The full version of this article can be seen with more photographs in the March issue of Vogue, out now.*



ARTS

This week's new movies — pages 34-37



Bring on the pomp and pageantry

The new parliament must open in style, says Magnus Linklater

No one watching the funeral of King Hussein of Jordan can have doubted the importance of ceremony. The dignified procession, the skirling pipes, the Last Post at the graveside, the presence of Prime Ministers and Presidents, all these sent out a signal of continuity and determination, not just to the Jordanian people, but to the outside world. It would be hard to overestimate the value of those few hours of public mourning — they were the King's last gift to his kingdom.

The ceremonial style of a nation says more about it than any number of political speeches. Strike the wrong note, and you are landed with an image that may be slipshod, pompous, overbearing, or all three. Nothing symbolised the Soviet Union more than those grim visages on the Kremlin wall, the strutting steps and the lumbering hardware. It can cloak tyranny in absurd pretension, as at the court of dictators such as Bokassa or Mobutu. It can be graceful, as at the Elysée Palace, or fusty, like the Vatican. Or it can, when everything slots into place, be just right, like the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. "How, but in custom and in ceremony/Are innocence and beauty born?" wrote W.B. Yeats.

Ceremony is one of the things the British are meant to be good at, and on July 1 comes a great occasion which cries out for it. Only this time, instead of careful planning, signs are beginning to emerge that we may make a mess of it. The opening of the Scottish parliament in Edinburgh is a constitutional milestone. The ceremony to mark it should be a gesture of confidence in the future, a recognition of the history and identity of a nation, and of partnership within the United Kingdom. It should arouse the enthusiasm and, if possible, the enjoyment of the people. But with just five months to go, there seems to be no clear idea of what should be done to convey these various messages.

Magnus Linklater

The traditional elements in most great Scottish ceremonies — the Royal Company of Archers, the Lord Lyon King of Arms, the heralds, the Lord High Constable, the Church and the judiciary — have heard nothing of what, if anything, they are required to do. The Army, police and staff of the royal household are awaiting firm instructions. The RAF, which was planning a flypast of Tornados, does not know whether they will be taking to the skies or not. Scottish Office ministers seem to be racked with indecision, with the "Roundheads" arguing for a plain and simple ceremony devoid of "frippery", and the "Cavaliers" pointing out that this should be a day of colour and ritual.

The ministers' job is not made any easier by the remodelling of the Royal Family. The one certainty is that the Queen will open the new Parliament. But she is said to be anxious not to import too much pomp and circumstance. Since she will be required to travel from the Palace of Holyroodhouse up the Royal Mile to the Assembly Hall, where the parliament will first sit, there are all the ingredients for a great day of pageant and history. But neither of these appeal greatly to the Blair administration. It prefers the Post-Modern, deconstructionist approach, in tune with Cool Britannia and the abolition of the hereditary peerage. The Prime Minister is said to believe that Scotland needs to shrug off some of its tartan-wrapped traditions, while Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State, worries about playing into the hands of the Nationalists, and is against heralds appearing "dressed like playing-cards".

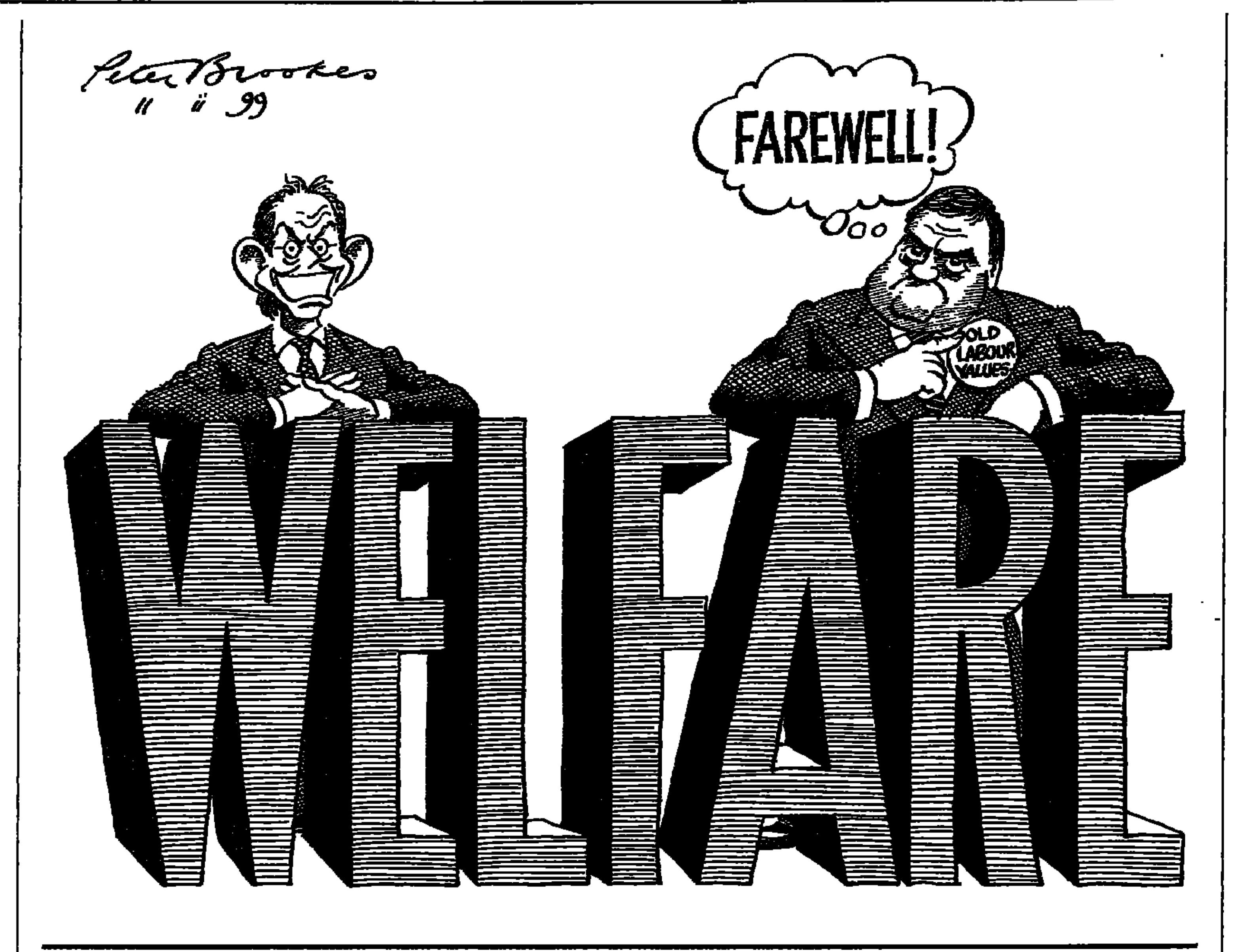
This is all nonsensical. History and tradition, far from imprisoning a nation, provide the solid foundation on which it rests. The Lyon and his Court (an office equivalent to the Garter King of Arms) is the oldest institution in the country, quite possibly in all of Britain, tracing its origins back to the Middle Ages and the days when the old Parliament sat on the moot hill of Scone. The Scottish Honours — the crown, sceptre and royal sword — far from being the archaic trappings of an outdated monarchy, are proud symbols of power. Tradition dictates that they are either carried into the Parliament in front of the monarch by Scotland's premier peer, the Duke of Hamilton, or by the Lord High Constable, the Earl of Errol. The Royal Company of Archers dates from the 17th century and it has been the monarch's bodyguard since 1822. Far from deriding these traditions, we should celebrate them.

Pageantry and colour were always one of the more distinctive features of parliamentary processions in Scotland, as a deliberate contrast, according to historians, to "the secretive and informal practices at Westminster". A French observer at the opening of the new Parliament Hall in 1639 said he had never seen anything more magnificent in all of Europe.

Why should we be embarrassed by that today? On the contrary, we should embrace it. By all means include the modern elements that symbolise a forward-looking country. But do not banish the rituals that people will actually enjoy, and which tell the world about a nation which wears its past with pride. Let us have the trotting horses, the banners, and the skirling pipes. Let us have the Queen dressed in the magnificent green robes of the Order of the Thistle, rather than carrying a handbag — which caused such offence when it happened at the Scottish Coronation ceremony in 1953.

And one final thought: take the Stone of Destiny out of its ridiculous glass case in Edinburgh Castle and put it beneath the chair of the parliament's Speaker, or Presiding Officer, as he will be called. It is a symbol of power — and that, after all, is what this parliament is meant to wield.

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Let the whistle blow

Until Europe enjoys true democracy, the brave are right to speak out

In 1995, Bernard Connolly, a senior European civil servant, took a leave of absence from his job as head of the European Commission's monetary affairs department, to write a polemical book. The product of his working holiday, *The Rotten Heart of Europe*, still stands as the most intellectually persuasive, economically coherent and politically prescient account yet published of the development of European institutions in the 1990s.

The book argued that the single currency project would be used to generate an irresistible momentum for fullscale political union in Europe, dominated by an implicit power-sharing agreement between the German and French political elites. This was a political project which had to be pursued by stealth because neither the peoples nor the parliaments of major European nations had ever been willing to support it when it was presented openly as an explicit aim.

Mr Connolly was promptly sacked by the Commission. Yesterday he was finally given the chance to challenge his dismissal before the European Court in Luxembourg. Mr Connolly claims that everything he said and did was consistent with his contract of employment, since he revealed no confidential information connected with his duties and wrote the book entirely in his spare time. This case raises two broader issues, ranging well beyond Mr Connolly's contract, on which newspaper commentators — and indeed all European citizens — emphatically can and should have views.

The first is about the hidden agendas which always play some part in politics, but which seem to be much more dominant in the politics of the European Union than in the politics of any other democratic state or institution. The second issue seems more technical and bureaucratic, but is equally far-reaching in its implications for democracy in Europe. It can be summed up in a simple question. Whom is a civil servant supposed to serve?

The search for hidden agendas in Europe has never been difficult. Many European politicians have never felt much inclined to hide their desire to create a United States of Europe, especially when talking among themselves and outside an election period. Reading the speeches and position papers put out by successive German and French Governments and by community institutions, it is clear that the single currency project is designed to constitute a big and irrevocable step topwards the ultimate goal of political union in Europe. For Tony Blair to deny this, as he does when he states that membership of EMU is not primarily a constitutional issue, is to commit a political perjury far more serious than any of which President Clinton has been accused.

The steady accretion of power by European institutions has been guided by the "functionalist" theory of Jean Monnet, the founding father of the "modern Europe". This concept, lucidly described in Bernard Connolly's book, maintains that the unification of the previously hostile nations of Europe will never be achieved by the normal methods of political democracy; but political unification can be brought about almost imperceptibly by transferring more and more governmental functions from national to European administrations.

Anatole Kaletsky

Monnet argued forcefully and presciently in the period of preparation for the 1956 treaties that these functional transfers of power, implying as they would the gradual unification of functional bureaucratic elites across Europe, would create an unstoppable momentum for fullscale political union, provided two main conditions were met. The transfers of power would have to start with relatively non-controversial economic functions, such as agriculture and steelmaking, so as to minimise concerns about the erosion of national sovereignty. And the functional transfers must be made irreversible, a condition guaranteed by the treaty doctrine of *acquis communautaire*, which asserts that all powers transferred to community institutions are permanently subject to European law and are therefore taken out of the ambit of national legislation.

For the four decades since their creation in the Treaty of Rome of 1956, the European institutions have been guided by the famous bicycle metaphor. Europe is like a bicycle — it must keep moving forward or it will fall down. The astonishing popularity of this metaphor among European politicians and officials has never been diminished by the standard riposte invented by the British Foreign Office: a bicycle does not fall over when it stops moving, as long as the rider puts his feet firmly on the ground.

More recently, as European unification accelerated beyond bicycle pace with the single currency project, another homely metaphor was popularised by Helmut Kohl: that of European "construction". The purpose of EMU was to build a "common home" for the peoples of Europe. My counter-argument to this has always been that a common political house is unlikely to be very stable if the constuction starts with a monetary roof and then moves downwards, with the democratic and constitutional foundations left until last.

This observation leads to the second, apparently technical, issue raised by the Connolly case — about the public responsibilities of European civil servants. This question is also at the heart of the second much more publicised controversy over "whistle blowing" in Brussels, which almost led to the removal of two European Commissioners, Edith Cresson and Manuel Marin and the resignation of Jacques Santer, the EU President, last month. That case centred on the allegations of widespread corruption in the overseas aid department presented by Paul van Buitenen, an audit official who was promptly suspended for making his allegations public after he was discouraged from digging too deep. But the fundamental issue was the same: Should they answer solely to their immediate superiors and commissioners or can they claim, as does Mr Connolly, a wider loyalty to the European public at large?

In normal constitutional democracies, even though whistle-blowing controversies still happen, such questions are relatively easy to answer. Different countries have different laws governing the rights of civil servants to speak out, but ultimately there is a legal line of accountability leading up to an elected official, whose constitutional status is clearly defined. In Britain, civil servants may be muzzled, but at least ministerial responsibility to the public is defined clearly, if rather erratically enforced.

In the new Europe, by contrast, power and responsibility seem largely to be divorced. Even when there is public accountability, this is not legally codified and arises more or less by chance. The European Central Bank, for example, claims to be the world's "most transparent central bank", because it issues a detailed press communiqué after each council meeting. But even if this comical claim were taken at face value, the bank's accountability is not enshrined in law — it is simply a policy the bank has chosen to adopt for its convenience and the time being.

The public responsibility of the Commission is equally undefined. Commissioners, who head the European bureaucracy and determine what people such as Mr Connolly and Mr van Buitenen are allowed to say in public, are very different from either ministers or senior civil servants in national governments. They are unelected, yet in contrast to the heads of Civil Service departments, they are not responsible to individual ministers and they cannot be dismissed. The lack of accountability, also known as the "democratic deficit", is hardly surprising in a European Union deliberately created by functionalist accretion in the absence of popular support.

Until Europe has a proper democratic constitution, it will be impossible to claim that the interests of voters are represented by commissioners, central bankers and other senior officials. In the absence of democracy, let us hope that some of their underlings continue to find the courage to speak up.

anatole.kaletsky@the-times.co.uk

'We can't even stop paintball games being held in our local woods because of some directive from Whitehall'

Michael Fallon

Conservatism should be small-minded. There was always something desperate about John Major's search for the big idea, as if a great political philosophy could be revived by a simple schema or pithy slogan.

Forget the big idea. Let's have some medium-sized ideas that will fit local needs and awaken local loyalties. William Hague arrives in New York today. He will see what devolution to the lowest level has done to revitalise schools in deprived areas, and how local provision of welfare in Texas can trump anything the centralised state can offer.

True Conservatism lies far beyond London SW1, out in our towns, villages and shires. To refresh itself the Tory party has to reconnect with the deeper instincts of a country that has never recognised the moral superiority of Whitehall.

Take education. We failed on grant-maintained schools because we didn't create enough of them. But we also failed because that which we let go in the funding of schools, we clawed back centrally on the curriculum. Why should pupils be denied five days' schooling a year because of the absurd "Baker" training days, which cost £140 million a year? Why not give head teachers the money and let them choose between books and training.

Halt the flood of directives from the Education Department and let schools be different. Let them, for example, set their own hours. Why is every state school closed on Saturday morning? Wouldn't just one of our 24,000 schools choose longer hours if head teachers had the freedom to set their own pay? Instead David Blunkett sends them a 42-page document, prescribing four separate sets of technical standards.

Take policing. Why should the Home Secretary in London decide the length of a police baton in Liverpool? Why shouldn't forces fix local priorities and justify them? The excuse is Home Office regulations, but we should have more local discretion.

And benefits. Welfare has been overnationalised. Local hospitals or healthcare groups should be offered the disability budget for their area and left to assess and distribute the funds according to actual need, not to set formulae. Then they could keep the money they save. Until people get a feel for their local welfare budget, we'll never get real pressure for reform. If we could see what is being paid out, town by town, district by district, local people would complain about the waste and fraud and demand action.

Then there are the roads. Why should districts be hamstrung by Whitehall rules on speed limits? If my villages in Kent want to clamp down on speeding, let them. If the police will not take speeding seriously, let local councils hand out fines and keep the revenue. They could then spend the money on noise mitigation.

Take planning. Why shouldn't parishes decide on signs in their conservation areas? My own parish council in Ide Hill cannot even rule on an application to stage paintball games because of some statutory instrument handed down from Whitehall.

And when it comes to housing, neither party has a clue how to control benefit. The annual budget should be tendered out to the leading local housing associations, which could tailor the benefit to the local housing market.

Of course we Tories centralised too much. In many cases we had to because it was the only way to set national standards so that comparisons could be made. We were clearing up the shambles that we inherited from the last Labour Government. But the result was to further alienate local communities from their own institutions. Grant-maintained schools and NHS trusts should have helped to refresh localism: instead they were seen as branch offices of Whitehall.

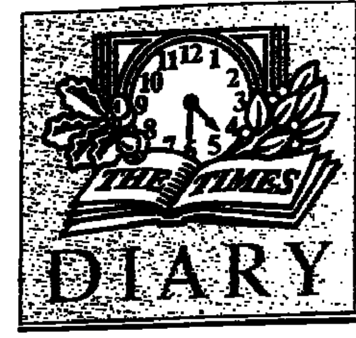
Are you proud of your local library? Constituents write to me about the lack of choice in Swanley Library, run by Kent council. Others write to me to complain about how long they had to wait in hospital. We don't have local institutions that accept real responsibility.

That's what we need to reverse. And we need to accept that local provision will vary. In some counties you'll get away with speeding; in others your school will stay open until 5pm or 6pm. Some towns will be more generous with benefits — but finding work in Barrow is a lot harder than in Berkshire. In some areas, it might be harder to get planning permission or to park.

But the prize would be a richer variety, delivered without pages of Whitehall regulations or the ubiquitous "guidance". Councils would do things differently and learn from one another.

And we would see real local institutions again — schools, hospitals and even town halls that command the loyalty and affection of their communities. Local price, perhaps, or is that just a pithy slogan?

The author is MP for Sevenoaks.



Away match

KARMA and korma is calling Glenn Hoddle. The defrocked England manager is being wooed by India to lead it to the promised land — the World Cup. After fevered lobbying, Uma Bharati, the Indian Sports Minister, is considering approaching the turbulent coach.

In Delhi, bold spiritual claims are respected. The Rev Glenn's belief in reincarnation is considered highly compatible with the majority Hindu faith. This, rather than England's uneven performance in France '98, seems to have impressed sub-continental sorts.

"India, where belief in karma and reincarnation originated, should offer Hoddle the job," runs a letter passing round the ministry. Bharati is interested privately, while expressing support for the incumbent, Syed Nayeemuddin, in time-honoured football fashion.

The Indian team has even been thrashed by Uzbekistan. As Michael Owen ponders how to spend £1.5 million a year in Liverpool, India's silkiest ballsmiths take £40 a week — enough for a lot of korma.

● *A NEW variation of leaves on the line by Railtrack: "discriminatory signalling". Not very PC.*

Court drama

TONY BLAIR'S hidden brother has found notoriety — not as a £400,000-a-year commercial barrister nor as the PM's only sibling — but as a dead ringer for all-American action man, Gene Hackman.





But William Blair, QC, right, is not impressed with his new fame and prefers to keep his briefs private.

● *A LOST manuscript of a feature-length film of the* Magic Roundabout *has been found in an attic by Phyllida Law, Emma Thompson's mum.* Dougal and the Blue Cat *by the late Eric Thompson features the usual suspects, such as Zebedee, in all its psychedelic glory, and the script is to be published.*

Love's muse

HAS Tony Harrison, shortlisted to be Poet Laureate, outed his secret lover in a new verse? While denouncing the position of Laureate, Harrison writes in passing about how he needs his girlfriend: "It was in this Stratford bookshop that I heard/Ted died, and needed my lover, stuck on stage/as Queen Elizabeth in *Richard III*/To help me not to brood I'm near Ted's age/While my lover had to do two *Richard IIIs*/I went to bed and read from front to back/all those four vols of Gray and found/these words: the saponaceous qualities of sack." Who is the mystery woman? The celebrated Sian Thomas is playing the part in *Richard III*. I trust the hint went down all right with Harrison's second wife, the soprano Teresa Stratas.



● *HARRODS toilers are so honest. After a jewellery show, small going home presents were given to departing guests. Raine Countess Spencer, the director of Harrods International, declined. "I'd better not. I'm staff," she shrilled.*

Jack snaps

JACK STRAW is growing precious. The Home Secretary was very cross when he spotted a researcher from Tory Central Office at the launch of the Asylum and Immigration Bill.

Straw called Sir Norman Fowler to demand he remove his spawn. Fowler promptly paged the bemused girl to suggest she leave the gathering post haste. But as Labour used to creep into Tory briefings, and the girl signed in as a Tory, why did Jack get heavy?

JASPER GERARD



ISLAM'S LUTHER

Khomeini's shadow still clouds the Muslim world

Twenty years ago an elderly, irascible Muslim cleric returned from 20 years exile and loosed a whirlwind in Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution overturned the Shah's regime and produced a realignment of political forces in the Middle East. But its ideological and spiritual influence spread far further. No corner of the Islamic world was unaffected by the radical return to theological fundamentalism as a reassertion of Islamic identity and ideals. Two decades later, it still reverberates with the aftershocks of a convulsion comparable to that initiated by Martin Luther.

The Khomeini revolution attracted a fanatical following because it reasserted the primacy of religion as a basis for all state activity at a time when Muslim countries were becoming increasingly secular. Ever since the early Muslim conquests, Islam has conceived of the *umma* as a single political and religious community. But after the early caliphs, the Islamic world lost that unity. Geographic, ethnic and dynastic differences produced splits, the most serious being the irrevocable schism between Sunni and Shia Muslims.

Iran, the centre of Shia Islam, has always been distinct from much of the Muslim world. Inevitably the search for unity and primacy has therefore had political as well as religious implications. The force of Khomeini's preaching was its uncompromising rejection of everything secular and everything emanating from the West. The message, as simple as it was uncompromising, appealed to the downtrodden, to whom westernisation had brought neither prosperity nor democratic liberties. It spoke to millions who felt a burning injustice that an ill-understood and thus alien Western culture dictated the political and material conditions of their lives. The message carried far beyond the boundaries of Iran: to Muslims everywhere who dreamt of a return to the golden age when the Islamic world was the centre of learning and power. It contrasted the corruption and excesses of modern rulers with the simple pious lifestyle of the early Muslims, and called for an uprising.

The message alarmed secular rulers across the Muslim world. Some tightened their political grip with a crackdown on "fundamentalist" radicals. Some tried to outdo Khomeini in displays of outward piety. Some quietly modified their laws in deference to religious sensibilities, paying lip service to *sharia*; others made it the law of the land. None could ignore the appeal of conservative religious fundamentalism. More thoughtful rulers, among them the late King Hussein, responded by setting up new, modern Islamic seminaries in which science and technology went hand-in-hand with Koranic studies.

The political threat has now been somewhat neutralised. The terror, totalitarianism, war and clerical corruption that engulfed Iran discredited theocratic tyranny; and resurgent Iranian nationalism united many Arab leaders in self-defence against militant Shia Islam. Medieval theocracy has not proved a workable model of government in the late 20th century, and in Iran itself, popular reaction against it has set in.

But the Khomeini virus still has life in it. Secularism is on the retreat in much of the Islamic world, with stricter observance of Muslim dress, moral codes and ceremonies. Muslim intellectuals who have sought to reconcile Islam with modernity have encountered greater intolerance. Some Muslims, especially in the West, have seen the need to integrate with the pluralist, multi-faith societies in which they live. Others have veered towards extremism. Many devout Muslims understand that Islam is in need of theological innovation to free it of the obscurantism of religious conservatives. The Muslim world is still divided and unsure of its direction. Twenty years on, Khomeini's shadow inhibits a necessary debate.

GO NORTH, YOUNG MAN

Hague might learn more from Giuliani than Bush

After an impressive performance at Prime Minister's Question Time, William Hague promptly departed for North America. It is a measure of Mr Hague's current ill fortunes that he has chosen to visit the United States at the moment when the Senate trial of President Clinton is reaching its climax. The Conservative leader lacks luck as well as other political advantages.

He is right, however, to look for new political ideas where ever he might find them. In the course of this tour, he will hold talks with Governor George W. Bush of Texas and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani of New York City. It is the conversation in Austin, that may take place only minutes after Mr Clinton's final acquittal, to which the Tories have attached most attention. The meeting in Manhattan may actually be of rather more value.

Mr Bush is the outright favourite for the Republican nomination in 2000 and has a real chance of capturing the White House. Yet his success comes from a capacity for presentation rather than enormous originality in policy. This in turn reflects a state Constitution that makes the Governor of Texas one of the least powerful chief executives in the United States. Mr Bush's appeal rests on his ability to take his message to women, Hispanic and black voters often alienated by the Republican leadership in Congress. His substance may be distinctly orthodox by American standards. His inclusive style is very unusual.

Nor is the content of Mr Bush's famed "compassionate conservatism" really suitable for export. If the slogan sounds like his father's call for a "kinder, gentler, America", the detailed provision is not. Under the Governor, Texas incarcerates more criminals at a younger age — 14 — and executes more murderers than any other state in the Union. It has slashed welfare provision to the minimum, legalised the carrying of concealed weapons and fostered a campaign to discourage sex before marriage. To the disappointment perhaps of some members of the Conservative Party, little of this material will make the final draft of Mr Hague's *Agenda for Britain* document.

The current Conservative crisis lies not primarily in presentation but policy. Their best policies have often been appropriated by new Labour: what is left is not especially attractive. If the Tories are seeking ideas on crime, education, transport or welfare then they would find Mayor Giuliani in New York, and a string of Republican Governors across the Midwest and Northeast of the United States, informative figures. These politicians have combined radical cuts in taxation and activist social policies with an emphasis on personal freedom that is not much heard in Texas. This concentration on bread-and-butter issues has reaped rewards at the polls.

There is an ongoing and intense debate in Conservative circles between those who believe it is essential that the party recaptures its advantage on economics and discovers how to extend market principles attractively into other spheres, and others who would instead place enhanced weight on broad themes and cultural values as represented by "the British way". In the American context, Mr Giuliani represents the first school of thought and Mr Bush the second. The Governor of Texas is, without doubt, far more likely to enter the Oval Office than the Mayor of New York. In the battle for Downing Street on these shores, however, it is Mr Giuliani who would prove the more formidable opponent for Tony Blair.

FAKING IT

Americans are not as hooked on sex as Kinsey suggested

Birds do it, bees do it, President Clinton cannot stop himself doing it; but, it seems, many Americans do not. While Capitol Hill is obsessed about what went on behind the Oval Office's door, the latest research from behind America's bedroom door reveals that surprisingly few regularly engage in sex. The survey, the biggest since the publication of Professor Alfred Kinsey's *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* in 1948, found that almost half of the country's women and nearly three out of ten men suffer from "sexual dysfunction". In the nation where free love began, many seem to share Evelyn Waugh's attitude towards sex: "For physical pleasure I'd sooner go to my dentist any day".

Kinsey ushered in the age of sexual liberation. While Senator McCarthy was whipping up an American hysteria about who might be lurking under the bed, Kinsey claimed he knew what was happening on it. The novelty and daring nature of his claims camouflaged the dodgy sampling on which his explosive research was based. The professor, a bisexual voyeur, relied heavily upon the experiences of a pederast and encouraged his wife to have extra-marital affairs in the pursuit of science. This did not prevent the public being captivated by the bewildering array of suggestive graphs, tables and statistics.

Although his book may have aroused the hopes of millions of adults, Kinsey himself appears to have shared the problems that many Americans now experience. He did not consummate his marriage for several months and admitted that his basic motive was to prevent others suffering the frustration he endured during his strict Methodist upbringing. He once asked a female student to name the part of the body that can enlarge a thousand times. The embarrassed girl told Kinsey he had no right to ask her such a question. The professor rebuked her. "I was referring to the pupil of the eye, and you, young lady, are in for a terrible disappointment".

Millions of Americans are now sharing that let-down. They might turn on their televisions to watch *Sex and the City* or *Ally McBeal*, but when they get between the sheets, their reaction is to turn off the light. This could finally explain the reason for Bill Clinton's extraordinary popularity. He is willing to take on what so many of his countrymen would rather sit out. Hollywood might nominate *Shakespeare in Love* for 13 Oscars but the sons and daughters of Uncle Sam, it appears, think sex is *Much Ado About Nothing*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Blair's Third Way compared with the Third Reich

From Mr Victor L. Harman

Sir, Max Beloff's parallels between Hitler and Mr Blair ("Third Way, or Reich?", February 9) cause extreme offence, and leave his credibility as a political commentator severely questioned. Moreover, for him to exclude the political violence and racism of Nazism, "which one must", is to analyse the means without reference to the ends, and stretches a hypothesis too far.

Should one be able to shrug off the absurdity of the proposition, one might well come to the conclusion that a man who took a once proud and powerful country, brought to its knees by a foolish war, back to prosperity, power and self-belief, was deserving of some place in history as a magnificent politician and statesman. To observe that such a man achieved this transformation of his country by perfectly legitimate and constitutional means is only to heap further praise on his abilities. Likewise Mr Blair.

The charges of gullibility fired at those who choose to work with Mr Blair would be better directed at an electorate who have taken a fair portion of the last 50 years to realise that they are citizens of a country with a flawed, outdated and elitist system of government. Putting aside, as one apparently must, ends limited to little more than the continuance of the status quo, successive elected governments have been distinguished only by a common dereliction of duty to reform the constitution, the only means by which fundamental improvements can legitimately take place.

Yours faithfully,
VICTOR L. HARMAN,
3 Pinehurst, Prestbury,
Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 4BA.
February 9.

From Mr Robin Mills

Sir, Max Beloff's astute comparison of Third Way Britain to Nazi Germany can be expanded.

If you were not "politically correct" in Germany you lost your job, or worse. In Britain, Mr Hoddle lost his job not for alleged bad management but for saying something in which, rightly or wrongly, he believed.

In Nazi Germany, local party officials enforced the party line and positively encouraged informers. In Britain today there are planning "enforcement officers" in almost every district council and verbal complaints, rather than first being validated by parish councillors in a democratic way, are considered in secret.

The Nazi State intruded into every aspect of corporate and private life including what happened on private land. For example, it banned fox hunting.

All should heed Max Beloff's chilling analysis.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN MILLS,
Barrington Grove,
Burford, Oxfordshire OX18 4TE.
February 9.

From Mr Richard Wood

Sir, The frustration felt by right-wing commentators with the continuing popularity and ascendancy of the Labour Government has produced a number of increasingly hysterical, unsavoury and personal attacks on Mr Blair. However, today's offensive article by Max Beloff, claiming to find parallels between Mr Blair and Hitler, plumbed new depths of malice and absurdity.

By comparison, Michael Gove's likening in the adjacent article of President Clinton (another figure whose enduring popularity enrages the Right) to Barabbas seemed positively benign.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD WOOD,
1 Hele Mill, Helebridge,
Nr Bude, Cornwall EX23 OJA.
February 9.

From Rabbi Albert H. Friedlander

Sir, The dangerous use of analogy in history is clearly illustrated by Professor Beloff's "Hitler-Blair" view from the groves of academe. Others will dissect it properly. I can only cite my experience as a child in Nazi Germany, my work in the US and my past 35 years in Great Britain. The poison of Berlin and the freedom of London I experienced emanated from differing political systems.

Beloff's "if one excludes the political violence and racism of Nazism, which one must" is a fundamental mistake: Hitler's later political actions were built upon the innate evil of his own character which was part of his politics, and no analogy can be found here.

The misuse of power can be applied to many political systems, but Donald Dewar is no "Gauleiter-in-waiting", as Beloff suggests, nor has Blair appointed to the House of Lords the likes of Leni Riefenstahl or Albert Speer. Dredging these names out of the debris of past history and applying them to the current scene is a slur upon the House and the many creative people appointed to it.

Sincerely yours,
ALBERT H. FRIEDLANDER
(Dean, Leo Baeck College),
Kent House,
Rutland Gardens, SW7 1BX.
February 9.

From Sir Sigmund Sternberg

Sir, It seems that Lord Beloff was not intending to be satirical in his article today. If that's so, then he has made the best case I have heard for direct election of the Upper House. Or is that a fascist notion?

Yours sincerely,
S. STERNBERG,
The Sternberg Centre for Judaism,
The Manor House
80 East End Road, N3 2SY.
February 9.

From Mr Michael Weigall

Sir, Max Beloff says: "Blair's style of government is chillingly reminiscent of Germany in the Thirties." Naturally people will say it couldn't happen here.

Yet what happened the last time the British had to vote on the constitutional legitimacy of our governors? It was at the "miners' election" of February 1974, which Edward Heath had called on the issue of who should run the country — the unions or the elected government.

It seemed a genuine issue of profound constitutional importance. But the nation voted in droves for the lights to come back on, for the easy life instead of constitutional principle.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL WEIGALL,
33 Westbourne Gardens, W2 5NR.
February 9.

From Mr Robert Shaw

Sir, With his proposed scything reform of the House of Lords, Tony Blair, in one swift stroke of the pen, will surely dispatch far more hereditary peers than did the guillotine during the French Revolution. It would thus be more appropriate for him to wear a cockade in his "liberty bonnet" than to sport a moustache.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT SHAW,
13 Bridge Road,
Twickenham TW1 1RE.
robshaw@globalnet.co.uk
February 9.

Bahai education blocked in Iran

From Professor Sir Richard Doll and others

Sir, The Bahai faith, which was founded 150 years ago in Iran, advocates non-violence and toleration of all other religious beliefs. With 300,000 adherents it remains the largest non-Muslim religious minority in Iran, despite persecution.

Following the 1979 Islamic revolution, Bahais were at first barred from all forms of education and any Bahai teachers were to be dismissed from their jobs. Although their access to school education was reinstated in the late 1980s, access to university education was not: a Supreme Revolutionary Council decree of February 25, 1991, stated that:

> The Government's dealings with the Bahais must be such that their progress is blocked ... they must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahais.

Hence, for the past decade the Iranian Bahai community has organised an open-university style "Bahai Institute of Higher Education". But, in October 1998, 36 members of its faculty were arrested (of whom four remain in prison). At the same time, 500 Bahai homes were raided and textbooks, computers and furniture were seized by the Government's intelligence agency. (When queried about the seizure of the personal household effects, the officers claimed they had been authorised by the Ministry of Information to take anything they wished.)

Iran is signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which condemns religious discrimination, and as the nation modernises it will have to find ways of accommodating not only the Christian but also the Bahai community. Freedom for religious belief is an essential component of academic freedom, and we call on Islamic scholars to help re-establish, in Iran and elsewhere, the tradition of tolerance that has characterised some of the greatest Muslim civilisations.

Yours etc,
RICHARD DOLL,
Department of Medicine,
University of Oxford.
RICHARD GOMBRICH,
Oriental Institute.
RICHARD PETO,
Department of Medical Statistics and Epidemiology.
RICHARD PRING,
Department of Educational Studies,
KEITH WARD,
Department of Theology,
c/o The Radcliffe Infirmary,
Oxford OX2 6HE.
February 8.

Policy on Sierra Leone

From the Foreign Secretary

Sir, Simon Jenkins's assertion today, "Fire, film — and forget", that diplomats "lie abroad for their country" was offensive and his description of British policy on Sierra Leone was deeply ill-informed.

Far from leaving town, as he puts it, Britain has remained committed to the maintenance of President Kabbah's democratic government in the face of a persistent and brutal rebellion. We are providing practical support on intelligence and other matters to the West African force that is supporting President Kabbah. Twice this year already, we have committed extra funds.

Mr Jenkins asks what on earth we are doing meddling in Sierra Leone and bizarrely accuses the British Government of imperialism in its stance against, for instance, President Milosevic.

What we are doing in Sierra Leone is making every effort to support those who are trying to prevent innocent civilians being murdered and mutilated by armed gangs.

What we are doing in Kosovo is trying to help the parties to a protracted conflict find a peaceful solution that prevents further ethnic massacres. This does not meet any definition of imperialism that I would recognise.

To ignore what is happening in places like Sierra Leone and Kosovo would not meet any definition of a responsible foreign policy for a civilised nation that I would subscribe to.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN COOK,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
Whitehall, SW1A 2AH.
February 10.

Judges threatened in Zimbabwe

From Mr J. B. Reavill

Sir, Three Supreme Court judges in Zimbabwe have been invited by Mr Mugabe to resign because they have pointed out that the Armed Forces are not empowered to arrest civilians and that torture is intolerable (reports, February 8 and 9; leading article, February 9).

This is not the first time that an attempt has been made by the authorities in Zimbabwe to intimidate judges, but the one thing that Zimbabwe has always been able to be proud of — up to now — is an independent judiciary (letter, February 4).

One of the judges who have protested at the persecution of journalists for reporting news which is unwelcome to Mr Mugabe is N. J. ("Nick") McNally. He was a member of the team appearing in 1965 on behalf of two people who had been detained under emergency regulations because of their support of African nationalist politics. The government of the day was far from happy about being challenged in the courts but it was willing to submit its actions for judgment. While he was still practising at the Bar he was a consistent supporter of centrist politics opposed to Ian Smith and the Rhodesian Front party in power.

The statements that have been made by the Zimbabwe Government in recent days seem to be saying that any acts, however unconstitutional, are justified if they are perpetrated to preserve law and order. Let us hope that the people who are now saying this do not later on find the same weapon turned against them.

Yours faithfully,
J. B. REAVILL,
34 Byron Way,
Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 2GU.
February 9.

'Blue Peter' childhood

From Mrs Susanna Denniston

Sir, We are informed that Stuart Miles, the presenter of *Blue Peter*, is leaving the programme as it affords too "twee" and "comfort blanket" an approach to life (report, February 8, later editions).

Perhaps Mr Miles has grown up. For too many children, however, childhood is increasingly short and "hard-hitting". Is it a bad thing that a programme aimed at children should not set out to "shock or offend"? That the programme makers at *Blue Peter* aim to inform and educate within the realm of childhood should be applauded. It is a rare thing as we force our children towards an ever younger understanding of an adult world.

Let us be brave. Let us err on the side of caution with our children.

Yours sincerely,
SUSANNA DENNISTON,
18 Hotham Road, Putney, SW15 1QB.
February 8.

OUP music and poetry

From Dr Margaret Bent

Sir, Henry Reece, chief executive of the Oxford University Press (letter, February 9), is surely forgetting musical composition when he writes: "We have never published any other kind of contemporary adult creative writing."

If "Writing poetry is a valuable activity, but ... not an academic one and not part of OUP's primary purpose," why was it OUP's academic music books division, and not the profitable music list, that was closed down last year, during the 75th anniversary celebrations of their joint foundation? The transfer to an already overburdened editor in New York makes inevitable an overall reduction in commissioning by what was once the leading publisher of academic music books in the UK.

OUP music has been invoked as a commercial standard by which the much younger poetry list fails, but a longer view is needed: Vaughan Williams and William Walton were once far from profitable, and the department lost heavily for its first 20 years. Those dead composers now cross-subsidise contemporary music, which is even less profitable than poetry.

If the cutting of poetry is to be defended on grounds of consistency to academic commitment, Mr Reece should restore the academic music books division to Oxford, in partnership with the music department from which they were split in 1982, and to whose excellence, specialist experience and prosperity both contributed from 1923.

Yours sincerely,
MARGARET BENT,
All Souls College, Oxford OX1 4AL.
February 9.

Mummies and Daddies

From Mrs Tamsin Woolsey-Brown

Sir, A study by Care for Education tells us (report, February 4) that nursery school children are abandoning traditional games of "Mummies and Daddies" in favour of those featuring mothers only.

I am pleased to say that the children at my nursery school in Norwich delight in playing "Mummies and Daddies", even discussing at length whose turn it is to be Daddy or Mummy, and sometimes agreeing to having at least two of one or the other.

Yours faithfully,
TAMSIN WOOLSEY-BROWN,
Sunningdale Nursery,
1 Broom Close,
Bracondale, Norwich NR1 2AX.
February 4.

Sticky elixir

From Mr James Leigh

Sir, I had assumed from the pharmaco-babble of friends and pill-bottles that lecithin was a compound kin to nectar and ambrosia permitting new-age mortals to live as gods. I now discover from Word-Watching (February 3) that it is

> A sticky orange substance ... originally derived from egg yolk ... now taken from a variety of living tissue ... a mixture of glycero-phospho-lipids and various fatty acids ... used in the food, pharmaceutical, petroleum and paint industries.

Thank heavens for that.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES LEIGH,
Ulwards Lodge, Thornton Watlass,
Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 4AS.
wexwork@compuserve.com
February 3.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Health spending

From Mrs F. C. Stacey

Sir, Ms Lorraine Leighton deliberately chose to gamble with her life by taking Ecstasy and receives £250,000 in compensation for inadequate treatment of the condition induced by her irresponsibility, not counting the cost to the NHS of her care (report, February 9).

The NHS denies women with ovarian cancer the best first-line treatment for their condition on grounds of cost (Body and Mind, same day).

Where's the justice?

Yours etc,
F. C. STACEY,
39 Manor Road, Farnley Tyas,
Huddersfield HUD4 6UL.
February 9.

Period residence

From Mr Guy de la Bédoyère

Sir, I was interested to learn that the Romans arrived in the Lincoln area in "about 42BC" (report, "Des res with a slice of history", February 5).

I had been labouring under the impression that the settlement was founded in the 70s AD by the governor, Petillius Cerealis, who installed the ill-fated legion IX Hispana there, nearly 30 years after the traditionally accepted invasion date.

Still, perhaps the news has yet to reach your reporter.

Yours faithfully,
GUY de la BEDOYERE,
20 Eltham Park Gardens,
Eltham, SE9 1AW.
February 5.

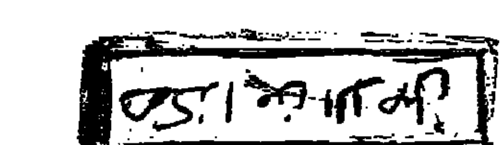
Gathering steam

From Mr Steve Field

Sir, I recently noticed that a set of new signs on the boundaries of Gosport herald it as "The Millennium Town". I confess to being somewhat confused as to the precise meaning of this claim.

This feeling was compounded when I purchased a new kettle proudly proclaimed to be "The Millennium Kettle". Perhaps it is a reference to how long things take to come to the boil.

Yours etc,
S. FIELD,
12 Rectory Close, Stubbington,
Hampshire PO14 2NA.
February 10.





COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
February 10: His Excellency Dr Beyene Negewo was received in audience by The Queen and presented the Letters of Recall of his predecessor and his own Letters of Credence as Ambassador of Ethiopia to the Court of St James's.

Mr John Shepherd, Deputy Under Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was present.

The Queen held a Council at 12.40pm.

There were present: The Right Honourable Margaret Beckett, MP (President), the Right Honourable Lord Gilbert, MP (Minister of State, Ministry of Defence), the Right Honourable Jack Straw, MP (Secretary of State for the Home Department), the Right Honourable John Morris, MP (Attorney General).

Mr Menzies Campbell, MP, Sir William Campbell, MP, Mr Adam Ingram, MP, Sir John Laws, MP, Mr Paul Murphy, MP, and Sir Stephen Sedley, MP, were sworn in or made affirmation as a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.

Mr Alex Galloway was in attendance as Clerk of the Council.

The Right Honourable Sir Robert Fellowes was received by The Queen upon relinquishing his appointment as Private Secretary to The Queen and Keeper of the Queen's Archives.

The Duke of Edinburgh was represented by Major-General A.M. Keeling, Royal Marines, at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Major-General Robert B. Loudoun, Royal Marines, which was held in The Abbey Church of St Peter and St Paul, Bath, today.

Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy was represented by Lady Thompson.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
February 10: The Prince of Wales, Patron, The General Osteopathic Council, this morning opened the General Osteopathic Council Building, Tower Bridge Road, London.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
February 10: The Princess Royal, President, British Knitting and Clothing Export Council, today visited the Scottish Apparel Group, Portland Place, London W1.

Her Royal Highness, Patron, The Home Farm Trust, this afternoon attended their Management Board update meeting at Mitsubishi Electric plc, Kierran Cross, The Strand, London WC2.

The Princess Royal, President, Royal Yachting Association, later attended a Council Meeting at the Royal Thames Yacht Club, Knightsbridge, London, SW1.

Her Royal Highness, this evening presented the Whitley Award Scheme for International Nature Conservation at the Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, London, SW7.

KENSINGTON PALACE
February 10: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, President, The Birmingham Royal Ballet, this evening attended the London Premiere of *The Prospect Before Us* and *The Protecting Veil* at Sadler's Wells, London, EC1.

Today's royal engagements

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, will present the Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education at Buckingham Palace at 11.00. The Princess Royal, as Chancellor, London University, will attend.

Prince Edward, patron, will attend the London Mozart Players' 50th anniversary concert in the Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, at 6.30.

The Princess Royal will open the Adolescent Unit of the Middlesex Hospital, Mortimer Street, London W1, at 2.00.

Princess Margaret, will visit the Peckham Settlement, Goldsmith Road, London SE15, at 3.00.

The Duke of Kent, patron, British Computer Society, will attend the BCS Information Technology Awards 1998 at the Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y, at 6.30.

Church news

The Ven Peter William Wheatley, Archdeacon of Hampstead, has been appointed to the Suffragan See of Edmonton (London Diocese), in succession to the Right Rev Brian John Masters.

Dr Alexander Cooke

A memorial service for Dr Alexander Macdougall Cooke will be held in Merton College Chapel, Oxford, on Saturday, February 20, 1999, at 2.30pm.

William Servaes

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Bill Servaes will take place at St Mary's Church, Bryanston Square, London W1, on Tuesday, March 2, 1999, at noon.

Appointments in HM Forces

Royal Air Force
AIR COMMODORE
H.G. Mackay - HQ STC, 1.2.99; R.L. Dixon - HQ 11/18 GP, 8.2.99; L.A. Doble - MOD, 12.2.99.
GROUP CAPTAIN
T. Kirby - HQ STC, 1.2.99; P.D J. Turner - HQ PTC, 1.2.99; N.B. Spiller - HQ STC, 8.2.99; J.C. Platt - MOD 12.2.99.
WING COMMANDER
G.J. Howard - OC TSW RAF Stafford, 11.1.99; A J R Davenport - GP Capt Logs 5 HQSTC, 18.1.99; R.S Smith - OC HQ Land Wilton, 8.1.99.

Memorial services

Major-General R.B. Loudoun
The Duke of Edinburgh, Captain General of the Royal Marines, was represented by Major-General A. M. Keeling and Princess Alexandra, Patron of the Mental Health Foundation, was represented by Lady Thompson at a service of thanksgiving for the life of Major-General Robert Beverley Loudoun held yesterday in Bath Abbey.

Prebendary Richard Askew, Rector, officiated, assisted by the Rev A.A. Braithwaite. Major-General Sir Jeremy Moore read the lesson. Mr Steven Loudoun, son, read from the works of Isaac Penington, Mr Robin Loudoun, son, read from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran and Miss Louise Loudoun, granddaughter, read from the works of John Masefield. General Sir Ian Gourlay gave an address.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man pronounced the blessing. Members of the family, the Commandant General, Royal Marines, representatives of the Royal British Legion, the Royal Marines Association, Bath, the Royal Marines Reserve, the British Southern Slav Society and many other friends and former colleagues were among those present.

Mr Tom Johnson-Gilbert
A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Mr Tom Johnson-Gilbert, a former joint Senior Partner of Clifford Chance, Solicitors, was held yesterday at the Church of St Botolph-without-Aldersgate, London, EC1. The Rev David Prior officiated. Mr Bill Thomas and Mr Nigel Fox Bassett read the lessons.

Sir Michael Kerry, QC, and Sir Max Williams gave addresses.

The Clifford Chance choir sang during the service.

Birthdays today

Sir Ronald Arculus, former diplomat, 76; Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Berger, 74; Professor Marilyn Butler, Rector, Exeter College, Oxford, 62; Brigadier Iain Cameron, 56; Dr Timothy Chambers, paediatrician, 53; Mr C.H. Dearnley, organist, 69; Mr Patrick Leigh Fermor, author, 84; Sir Archibald Forster, former chairman, Esso UK, 71; Sir Vivian Fuchs, FRS, former director, British Antarctic Survey, 91; Mr Hans-Georg Gadamer, philosopher, 99.

Mr Michael Jackson, Chief Executive, Channel 4, 41; General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, 58; Mr Steve McManaman, footballer, 26; Mr Leslie Nielsen, actor, 73; Miss Mary Quant, fashion designer, 65; Mr Burt Reynolds, actor, 63; the Earl of Rosebery, 70; Sir Patrick Holmes Sellors, ophthalmologist, 65; Baroness Sharples, 76; Mr Dennis Skinner, MP, 67; Mr John Surtees, former motorcycle and motor racing champion, 65; Mr E.W. Swanton, author and sports commentator, 92; Miss Mary Tregear, FBA, oriental art historian, 75; Mr Malcolm Walker, chairman and chief executive, Iceland Frozen Foods, 53.

FIONA HANSON



The first female musicians with the Welsh Guards, Lucy Ellis, 24, from Tywyn, North Wales, with the French horn, and flautist Joanna Williams, 19, from Builth Wells, Mid Wales, at Wellington Barracks, London, yesterday

Luncheons

Middle East Association
The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry was the guest of honour and speaker at the annual luncheon of the Middle East Association held yesterday at the London Hilton on Park Lane. Mr Richard Owens, chairman of the executive committee of the association, presided. Sir James Craig, president, also spoke.

Guild of Sports Internationalists
Ms Michele Verroken, Director of the UK Sports Council on Ethics and Anti-Doping, was the guest speaker at a luncheon of the Guild of Sports Internationalists held yesterday at Wax Chandlers' Hall. During the luncheon Mr Terry Moule, Master, presented a charitable donation to Mr Paul Anderson, Director of the Special Olympics UK.

Dinners

Royal College of Surgeons
Lord Butterfield was the principal guest and a speaker at the Hunterian dinner held last night at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Mr Barry Jackson, president, was in the chair and the Secretary of State for Health also spoke.

Savoy Gastronomes
The Committee of the Savoy Gastronomes were the hosts at a dinner held last night in London in honour of Mr David Ward the retiring chairman.

School news

Northaw School, West Tytherley
Northaw School (now Norman Court Preparatory School) is updating its roll of former pupils. Please would all Old Northavians and Northaviannes, of whatever vintage, get into touch directly with Denis Blake (Headmaster 1973-1989) at Yew Tree House, Charlton All Saints, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP5 4HQ. We need to know your present address - and news, please - so that the ON Association can be re-founded, enlarged and modernised.

Lecture

Plumbers' Company
Dr Neil Summerton, Director of the Oxford Centre for the Environment, Ethics and Society, and Dr Peter Warren, Director of the World Humanity Trust, were the speakers at the Plumbers' Company annual lecture held yesterday at the One Great George Street Conference Centre, London SW1. Mr Edward Hopkinson, Master, presided.

Appointment

Ambassador to Egypt
Mr Graham Boyce has been appointed Ambassador to Egypt, from early summer, in succession to Sir David Blatherwick who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Elizabeth of York, Consort of King Henry VII, London, 1465 (she died this day, London, 1503); William Fox Talbot, photographic pioneer, Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire, 1800; Thomas Alva Edison, inventor, Milan, Ohio, 1847; Farouk I, King of Egypt 1936-52, Cairo, 1920.

DEATHS: Carl Bellman, songwriter, Stockholm, 1795; Jean Foucault, physicist, Paris, 1868; Honoré Daumier, caricaturist and painter, Valmondois, France, 1879; James Augustus Grant, African explorer, Nairn, Highland, 1892; Sir Charles Parsons, inventor of the steam turbine, Kingston, Jamaica, 1931; John Buchan, 1st Baron Tweedsmuir, novelist, historian, Governor-General of Canada 1935-40, Montreal, 1940; Sergei Eisenstein, film director, Moscow, 1948; Ernest Jones, psychoanalyst and writer, London, 1958; Harry Martinson, poet and dramatist, Nobel laureate 1974, Sweden, 1978.

London University was founded, 1826.

Bernadette Soubirous stated that a vision of the Virgin Mary had appeared before her, Lourdes, France, 1858.

The first weekly weather report was issued by Meteorological Office, 1878.

The Lateran Treaty established an independent Vatican City, 1929.

Margaret Thatcher became the first woman leader of a British political party, 1975.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr C. Beechey-Newman and Miss C.J. Turner
The engagement is announced between Christopher, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Hansel Beechey-Newman, of Falmouth, Cornwall, and Catherine Jane, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Colin Turner, of Lee, London.

Mr A.E.V. Clarke and Miss K.L.G. Lee
The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Mr Edward Clarke, of Pentrehobyn, Mold, Flintshire, and of Mrs Sarah Clarke, of Foxhill House, Hawling, Gloucestershire, and Katherine, daughter of Mr and Mrs James Lee, of Meadow Wood, Penshurst, Kent.

Mr M. Heathfield and Miss L.E. Poland
The engagement is announced between Miles, son of Mr and Mrs Alan Heathfield, of Exmouth, Devon, and Lisa Evelyne, daughter of Mrs Elizabeth Thomas and stepdaughter of Mr Timothy Thomas, of Winkfield, Berkshire.

Mr E.J.C. Talbot and Miss J.C. Scott
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs John Chetwynd-Talbot, of Wilton, Wiltshire, and Joanna, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs James Scott, of Chobham, Surrey.

Mr J.P.F. Mogg and Miss H.A. Flay
The engagement is announced between Peter, elder son of Brigadier and Mrs Nigel Mogg, of Brightwell Baldwin, Oxfordshire, and Henrietta, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Terence Flay, of West Green, Hampshire, and Trebetherick.

Mr M.W.G. Preston-Jones and Miss R.E.M. Quinn
The engagement is announced between Mark, son of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs G.W. Preston-Jones, of West Lavington, and Rachel, daughter of Mr and Mrs J.G. Quinn, of Eastbourne.

Captain G.A.G. Lewis and Miss M.S.S. Ott
The engagement is announced between Captain Gwilym Alexander Lewis, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, elder son of Mr and Mrs Gareth Lewis, of Newton Valence, Hampshire, and Mélanie, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Ott, of Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire.

Mr C.J.R. Stevens and Miss E.C. Macmillan
The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Mr and Mrs John Stevens, of Bierton, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, and Emily, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Iain Macmillan, of Lasswade, Midlothian.

Mr E.J.D. Tucker and Miss C.A.P. Bedingfeld
The engagement is announced between Edward, elder son of Mr and Mrs Charles Tucker, of Hindringham Hall, Norfolk, and Charlotte, younger daughter of Mr Henry Bedingfeld, York Herald, and Mrs Bedingfeld, of Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk.

Mr R.D. Tyrie and Miss A.J. Beresford-Jones
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Tyrie, of Reed, Royston, Hertfordshire, and Alexandra, daughter of Mr and Mrs Nicholas Beresford-Jones, of Leavenheath, Suffolk.

Marriage

Mr A. Tricket and Miss C.L. Bruce
The marriage took place on Saturday, February 6, in the Great Hall at Fraser Castle, Aberdeenshire, of Miss Claire Bruce, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs A. Bruce, of Fairlight, East Sussex, and Mr Andrew Tricket, younger son of Mr and Mrs J. Tricket, of St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex. Minister Sam Ballantyne officiated.

Latest wills

Johnny **Speight**, writer of the *Arthur Haynes Show, Morecambe and Wise Show, Till Death Us Do Part, In Sickness and in Health* with Ray Galton, of Chorleywood, Hertfordshire, left estate valued at £212,737 net.

Sir Francis Arthur **Vick**, President and Vice Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast 1966-76, Pro-Chancellor, University of Warwick 1977-92, of Warwick, left estate valued at £1,054,777 net.

Josephine Laura **Toynbee**, of Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, left estate valued at £253,901 net. She left £1,000 to both the Josephine Toynbee Fund at Small Heath School, Birmingham and the Dr Fernando Oncology Research Fund of University Hospital, Birmingham.

Winifred Mary Langrish **Boulthee**, of Tolleshunt Major, Maldon, Essex, left estate valued at £1,055,185 net. She left £10,000 to St Luke's Church, Balkenhall, Wolverhampton; £5,000 each to Trinitarian Bible Society, London SW19, Banner Trust of Truth of Edinburgh, and The Messianic Testimony of Barking, Essex.

Philip Henry Akerman **Brownrigg**, of Checkendon, Reading, Berkshire, left estate valued at £1,157,753 net.

Ronald **Godfrey**, of Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, left estate valued at £1,749,547 net.

Anthony John **Jeaney**, of Redbourne, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, left estate valued at £1,020,320 net.

Alys Honoria **Kennon**, of Over Kellet, near Carnforth, Lancashire, left estate valued at £1,828,936 net.

Irma Andree **Kingsley**, of London SW3, left estate valued at £1,097,299 net.

PERSONAL COLUMN

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4.3-4(AV).

BIRTHS

BAMBERG - On January 20th to Susan and Alexander, a beautiful daughter, Isabelle Alexandra, a joy to us all.

DENT - On January 30th 1999, at Queen Charlotte's Hospital to Rowena Bartlett, wife of Edward, twin daughters, Alicia Eloise and Tatyana Sophie.

DOYLE - On January 22nd at The Portland Hospital, to Suzanna (née Arschavir) and Paul, a daughter, Matilda Poppy Florence, a sister for Theo.

EL-AKABI - On January 30th at The Portland Hospital, to Nagia and Ziad, a beautiful girl, Sabrin, who has blessed our lives.

FAU - On February 8th at The Portland Hospital, to Laure and Jean, a son, Remi.

FORSYTH - On January 8th at The Portland Hospital, to Sharon Green and Mario Forsyth, a son, Luca Mario.

HOARE - On 31st December 1998 at Fairoaks Hospital, Virginia, USA, to Joanne (née Baylies) and Christopher, a son, Nicholas David, a brother for Charlotte and James.

HOPKINS - On January 25th, to Mark and Jessica (née Rudolf), a daughter, Sasha Beatrice.

JEHLE - On February 6th at The Portland Hospital, to Line and Frank, a daughter, Sine, a sister for Niklas.

JOLLY - On February 2nd, to Annabel (née Stirling) and Hugh, twins, a son Crispin Valentine and a daughter Venetia Charlotte.

LALVANI - On February 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Reena and Sunil, a darling son, Shaan Sunil, born at 7.45 pm.

LATHAM - On February 9th, to Caroline (née Gubbins) and John, a son, Charlie, a brother for Ben and Dominic.

LINDSAY - On February 3rd at The Portland Hospital, to Jane and Des, a beautiful son, Jasper, a brother for dear Camran.

MORRIS - On February 8th, to Susanna (née Gordon) and Blaise, a son, Felix George Archdale, at St Thomas' Hospital.

BIRTHS

PEPPIATT - On February 4th, to Sophia (née Sladden) and Stephen, a son, Marcus, a brother to Edmund, Jonathan and Susannah.

ROSENBERG - On February 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Carolyn and David, a daughter, Claire Audrey, an adorable sister for Spencer.

THORNE - On February 7th, to Angela (née Morrow) and Ben, the blessed gift of a son, Henry Samuel Escott, a brother for Lucy.

TURNBULL - On Tuesday 9th February, to Emma-Jane and Timothy, a daughter, Grace Joyce.

DEATHS

ADAMS - Katherine, widow of Flying Officer Wilfrid Adams and much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, peacefully on February 7th aged 87. Funeral at St Mary's Church, Buckland, Oxfordshire at 2.30 pm on Monday 15th February. Family flowers only; donations to RAF Benevolent Fund, 67 Portland Place, London W1N 4AR.

BARRETT - John Henry, died on 9th February aged 85. Husband of Ruth, father of Jane, Michael, Richard and Robert. Family funeral at St James, Dale, Pembrokeshire. Memorial Service details will be announced later in the year.

BLACKWELL - Sister Joyce, Religious of the Sacred Heart, peacefully on February 9th. Her funeral will be on February 19th at 2 pm at Duchesne House, Aubyn Square, London SW15. tel: (0181) 878-8282

BOSSON - Mary (Molly) of Uffculme, Devon on Monday 7th February 1999, aged 88 years. Formerly Matron of St Luke's Hospital for The Clergy. Much loved friend, aunt and sister. Funeral Service at Taunton Crematorium on Monday 15th February at 10.30am. No flowers, donations if desired to Help the Aged c/o Ref RFWS, Bevan Ashford Solicitors, Gotham House, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6LT.

DEATHS

BRIDGWATER - Arthur Brian M.B.E., B.Sc. (Hons) Eng., B.A. (Geol). Peacefully after a long illness on 8th February. Sadly missed by his family. Funeral Service at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, Surrey on Tuesday 16th February at 2 pm. No flowers, donations if desired to Princess Alice Hospice or Motor Neurone Disease Association c/o Hawkins & Sons, Highlands Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8ND.

BRITTON - Dr Joan (Judy) M, beloved wife of Hubert and mother of John, Clare, Thomas, Christopher and Lucy, died peacefully on 9th February 1999 after a long illness, aged 74. Funeral at St Osmunds Church, Exeter Street, Salisbury, at 12 noon February 18th. Family flowers only. Donations if wished to Pitton Ward or The Salisbury Hospice, Salisbury District Hospital c/o I.N. Newman Ltd, Griffin House, 55 Winchester Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 1HL.

BROWN - Major H.A. (Topper) Brown retired, 6th February in Harrogate at age of 86. France 1939. Indian Army 1940. 10th Hussars Germany 1947. Singapore 1948 and Kenya 1953. Husband of the late Mabel, survived by his son, daughter-in-law and three grandchildren.

BURRELL - Peacefully on February 7th 1999. Robert Michael Burrell, aged 56 years. Former Lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London. Beloved husband of Ann (née Fountain), he will be greatly missed by his family, his many friends and former students around the world. Requiem Mass at All Saints Church, Pin Green, Stevenage on Monday February 15th at 1 pm. No flowers please. Donations, if desired, to The Woodlands Trust would be greatly appreciated and may be sent c/o Austins & Sons, 9/11 Letchmore Road, Stevenage SG1 3JH. Please wear bright colours to celebrate Michael's life.

CHARLTON - On February 8th 1999 John George of Bruton, Somerset after a brave fight with ill health, aged 53 years. Beloved son of Evelyn and the late Tommy. Funeral service to take place at St John the Baptist's Church, Brewham, Bruton on Tuesday 16th February at 1.00pm. Family flowers only, donations in lieu for The Injured Jockeys Fund or the Imperial Cancer Research Fund may be sent to Oswald Clarke Funeral Directors, West End, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0BB. Tel 01749 813327.

COBB - Commander David Laurence Cobb CVO RN, on 29th January 1999, in Australia, much loved brother, uncle and godfather. Thanksgiving Service at 12 noon on Saturday 6th March at The Queen's Chapel in the Savoy, Savoy Hill, Strand, London WC2, to which his many friends are welcome. Donations, if desired, to The London Sailing Project, Universal Shipyard, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hants. SO31 7ZN.

CONRADY - Peacefully on February 8th 1999, Doris aged 94 years, daughter of the late Prof. A.E. and Mrs Conrady of London. Former Headmistress of St Mary's Hall, Brighton. Requiem Mass at St Peter's Church, East Blatchington, Seaford on February 24th at 12.30 pm, followed by private cremation. Please no flowers. Donations if desired to Save the Children Fund c/o Seaford and Newhaven Funeral Service, 22 Sutton Road, Seaford BN25 1RU, tel: (01323) 893889.

DANBY - Anthony John (Tony) peacefully on 9th February aged 79. A greatly loved husband, brother, father and grandfather. G.P. in the Lyndhurst area for 37 years. Funeral Service at All Saints Church, Minstead, on Tuesday 16th February at 2 pm. Family flowers only. Donations please to The League of Friends of the Fenwick Hospital c/o J. Sturney Funeral Directors, Wembdon, Pikes Hill, Lyndhurst SO43 7AY. tel: (01703) 282264. Thanksgiving Service at St Michael's Church, Lyndhurst, on Saturday 27th February at 11.30 am.

DUNHAM - Rose Margaret beloved wife of John for sixty years, sharing in love and friendship, died on 9th February 1999. At peace after a long illness. No flowers please, donations to The Arthritis Research Campaign. Funeral 17th February 2.30pm Randalls Park Cemetery, Leatherhead. Family only.

ESSEX - Maurice, passed peacefully on Sunday 7th February 1999. Aged 91, born on the same day 1908. Much loved husband to Rose, father to Bunty and Patricia, father-in-law to Phil, grandfather and great-grandfather. Sadly missed but never forgotten. Any donations to Amnesty International.

EVANS - Anne Lydia (née Jacobs) died aged 69 on 9th February. Beloved mother of Mark and Ruth, sister of Leonard and devoted Grandma to Polly. A wonderful woman who will be greatly mourned by family, friends and patients. Funeral on Tuesday 16th February, 2pm, Golders Green Crematorium. Flowers or donations to the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture c/o Kenyon, Funeral Directors, 9 Pond Street, London NW3.

FFRENCH BLAKE - Carolyn on 9th February aged 49. Much loved wife of Michael Dobbyn and mother of Robert and Clare. Funeral private. Family flowers only. Any donations to Cancer Research Campaign, 6 Cambridge Terrace, Regents Park, London.

GRIFFIN - Charles Frederick. On 8th February 1999. Husband of Iris. Father of Wynona and Ralph. Memorial Service at St Peter's Church, Dixton, Monmouth, 2.30 pm Tuesday 16th February. No flowers. Donations to David Stockwell & Co., 16 Glendower Street, Monmouth, in aid of the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian Institution.

JARVIS - Cyril, Lt. Col. (1st King George V Own Gurkha Rifles), died in London, aged 87, on 8th February 1999. Funeral Service at St Michael's Church, South Grove, Highgate, on Friday 12th February at 12 noon, followed by private cremation.

JENNINGS - Alice Minnie, much loved wife of the late George and mother of Bryan, Vivienne, Roger and Carolyn, suddenly on 8th February 1999. Cremation at the South Chapel, City of London Cemetery and Crematorium, Aldersbrook Road, Manor Park, London E12 at 11.45 am on Tuesday 16th February 1999. Enquiries to Messrs. Warriner & Sons of 32 Church Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 1LA (Tel: 0181 508 1752).

KENIG - On February 2nd, aged 94. Dr Maurice Kenig MD, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Officier de l'Ordre National du Mérite, very dear husband of Winifred, father of Martin and Nicole and grandfather of Theo. Private cremation has taken place.

LEGGETT - John Stephen (Jack) died peacefully on 5th February. Loving husband of Kathleen and devoted father to Penny. Family cremation only, at his request, on the 15th February. No flowers. Donations to the Parkinson's Society.

LEITCH - David Richard (Dr.) Surgeon Commander RN ret'd of Packington, Leicestershire, the husband of Lesley and father of May, the son of Matthew, died on 8th February 1999 aged 55 years. The funeral service will be held at Bretby Crematorium on Monday 15th February at 3 pm. Family flowers only please. Donations in lieu of flowers if so desired for The Sue Ryder Home, Staunton Harold - King George's Fund for Sailors. Any enquiries may be made to J.P. Springthorpe & Co. FD, Ashby-de-la-Zouch. tel: (01530) 417310.

LEUNG - Anthony Ting Chu, Doctor, suddenly on 7th February, devoted husband of Anna, loving father of Amanda and Annabel. Much loved and greatly missed by all his family and friends. Funeral at St Simon Zelotes Church, Chelsea on Monday 15th February at 11.30 am. Family flowers only. Donations please for HEMS London Charity (Air Ambulance), c/o Jill Williams, A&E Department, Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, E1.

LINES - Phyl, on 6th February 1999, at Charing Cross Hospital, London, after long illness very bravely borne. Family and friends were with her. Much loved mother of Sharon and wife of Peter. Lately of Emanuel Miller Centre for children and families, Tower Hamlets. Funeral: West Chapel, West London Crematorium, Kensal Green, Monday 15th February, 2.15pm. If wished, flowers, or donation for MENCAP or British Lung Foundation, c/o H J Bent & Co, 343 Ladbroke Grove, London W10 6HA.

LOWENSTEIN - On 31st January 1999 Professor Otto Egon Lowenstein FRS aged 92 years. Mason Professor Emeritus of Zoology and Comparative Physiology at Birmingham University. Funeral service at Lodge Hill Crematorium, Birmingham on Wednesday February 17th at 10.30am. All enquiries to Thos. Furber & Co Ltd, Funeral Directors (0121 427 2233).

MASTERMAN - The death is announced of Anne (née Bouwens) on 5th February 1999 aged 84. Following the cremation on 11th February 1999 there will be an interment Service at Littleton Church, Middlesex, on Wednesday 17th February at 2.30 pm.

MATTHEWS - On February 7th 1999 peacefully in hospital, Elizabeth, latterly of Eton College School of Mechanics, beloved sister to Doreen and aunt to Patricia and Michael and friend of many. Funeral service at Eton College Chapel 3.15pm on Friday 12th February followed by private cremation. No flowers. Donations to Macmillan Nurses.

McINTYRE - Molly aged 14, beloved daughter of Lesley McIntyre and Marius Borgen, died peacefully at home on 8th February. Service at Putney Vale Crematorium on Monday 15th February at 3.30 pm. Flowers or donations to Disability Law Service, High Holborn House, 52-54 High Holborn, London WC1V 6RC.

MITCHELL - Henry Kirkland died at home on 7th February 1999. Dearly loved husband, father, brother and father-in-law. Service at St James' Church, Kidbrooke Park Road, Blackheath, on Tuesday 16th February at 3 pm. No flowers please but donations to Blackheath Friends of Imperial Cancer Research Fund c/o Lloyds Bank, Blackheath, A/C No. 0270843, would be welcomed.

POWELL - David Melvin unexpectedly at home on February 6th 1999 aged 71 years. Loving husband of Vivienne and much loved father of Susanne, Julia and Elizabeth. Grandfather of Dylan, Lucy and Jamie and father-in-law of Cameron. Funeral at St Margaret's Church, Chipstead, on Wednesday February 17th at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to The British Heart Foundation c/o Stoneman FS, Doran Court, Reigate Road, Redhill, RH1 6AZ.

RICKETTS - Dr Bruce S., peacefully on February 6th, after a long illness. Much loved husband of Fiona and father of Simon and Pippa. Private cremation on Friday, 12th February. No flowers please but donations, if wished, to The Samaritans or Action Research c/o Jno Steel & Son, Chesil House, Winchester. Thanksgiving Service at Winchester Cathedral on Monday, March 1st at 12 noon.

RIDGE - Suddenly on 7th February Keith Anderson aged 91 years. Beloved husband of the late Alison and a loving father and grandfather. Funeral Service at St Mary's Church, Leigh, Kent on Monday 15th February at 11 am. Family flowers only but donations to Cancer Research c/o Ord-Hume Funeral Services, tel: 01732 353746.

ROBSON OF KIDDINGTON - Baroness Inga-Stina on February 9th peacefully at Chilton House Nr Aylesbury in her 80th year, beloved widow of Sir Lawrence, sister of Karen and mother of Maurice, Kristina and Vanessa. Funeral at St Nicholas, Kiddington on Saturday February 13th at 2.30 pm. Flowers or donations to St Nicholas Church Kiddington, OX20 1BX.

SEWELL - Dorothy Daphne (Bobbie), Widow of Lt. Cmdr. A.J. Sewell passed away peacefully on Monday 8th February after a short illness. Beloved Mother, Grandmother and Great-Grandmother, friend to many. We will all miss her deeply. The Funeral Service will be held at 11.30 am on Tuesday 16th February at the Chapel in Weybridge Cemetery in Surrey.

SHUTTLEWORTH - Mary Joy died suddenly at her home in Cirencester on Monday 8th February aged 72 years. Further enquiries c/o Cowley & Son Ltd, Funeral Directors, Cirencester. Tel: 01285 653298.

STONE - Jennifer Clive (née Hughes), beloved wife of Michael, mother of Sarah Jane and Christina, grandmother of Natasha and Alice, peacefully at home on 5th February. Memorial Service at 2.30pm, Saturday 20th February in St George's Church, Wrotham. No flowers. Donations c/o WRVS, Suite 2, Branbridges Industrial Estate, East Peckham, Kent TN12 5HF. No mourning.

THOMPSON - Richard Gerald Bellairs. On February 6th 1999, at Aldeburgh, beloved husband of Lilian. Funeral service at Aldeburgh Parish Church on Thursday February 18th at 12 noon. Family flowers only please, but donations if wished, payable to the British Legion, may be sent to Farthing, Singleton & Hastings, 650, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich, IP4 4PW.

WELLER - Peacefully on 6th February, in the O.M.F. Retirement Home in Pembury, Kent. Doris (Gem) aged 90 years. For funeral details contact T.W. Boorman Funeral Services, 31 Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8AA. Telephone: 01892 541070.

WHEELER - Edith L.V.O. on February 10th 1999, peacefully, in London at Meadbank Nursing Home, Battersea, aged 94. Beloved mother of David and grandmother of Andrew and James. Cremation on Tuesday February 16th at Putney Vale at 4.00pm.

WYLES - Jessie Marie (née Champion) of Evenley, Northamptonshire in her 84th year. Peacefully but suddenly after a very short illness, at the Horton Hospital, Banbury on 8th February - the 31st anniversary of her adored husband Leslie's death. Dearest mother of Lynn Vanessa, much loved and devoted grandmother of Adam, Matthew, Cordelia and Jonathan, great-grandmother of Simon, Oliver, Amelia and Giles and the valued friend of many. Funeral Service at Banbury Crematorium on Tuesday, 16th February at 2pm. No flowers by request.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

HAWKER - A concert in Thanks for the life of Peter Norman Hawker MBE takes place at St Mary's Church, Froyle, near Alton, Hants on 20th February at 3 pm. Enquiries 01227 722 085

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

BUNTER - Ruby May 11th February 1994. A beautiful lady who loved and was greatly loved - her loving family remember her with pride and thanksgiving today and every day.

IAN GOW - 11.2.37 - 30.7.90. Remembered with love and pride, always.

ROLF - Dear Muriel who died this day in 1981. Remembered with love by Jim and Geoffrey.

WADIA - In proud and grateful memory of my dearly beloved husband Sir Cusrow Wadia on his birthday February 11th. Born 1889 died 3rd October 1950.

WYMBS - Patrick Vincent, 11th February 1997. Remembering our beloved Pat today and always. Jenny, Helen, Patrick, Ruth.

SERVICES

OBITUARIES

SIR ASHLEY BRAMALL

Sir Ashley Bramall, Leader of the Inner London Education Authority, 1970-81, and Labour MP for Bexley, 1946-50, died yesterday aged 83. He was born on January 6, 1916.

Ashley Bramall was a man whose early political career held great promise. He was chairman of the Oxford University Labour Club at 22, treasurer of the Oxford Union at 23, a parliamentary Labour candidate at 29 and an MP at 30.

In the House of Commons an opportunity which most aspiring politicians would immediately have seized soon came his way. He was offered the job of parliamentary private secretary to Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary. He turned it down. There were aspects of Bevin's policy on Israel which he thought misguided.

In 1950, at the age of 34, he was out of Parliament, beaten by Edward Heath at the February general election of that year. The majority against him was just 133 votes. Despite three further attempts (at Bexley in 1951 and 1959 and at Watford in 1955), he was never to return to the House of Commons.

To his own side he was at times something of an enigma. Fairness in political decisions came close to being an article of faith. Pragmatism, flexibility and compromise were considered, only to be dismissed. Party loyalty might be maintained in public but at private meetings he could be scathing at any hint of fudge. His speeches were delivered in a strong, forthright voice but they did not have appeal for mass audiences.

Ernest Ashley Bramall was the elder of the two children of Major Edmund Bramall and his wife Katharine Westby (his younger brother by eight years, Edwin, rose to be Field Marshal Lord Bramall, the former Chief of the Defence Staff). The two brothers made a unique family contribution to the official life of London. Sir Ashley was chairman of the Greater London Council, 1982-83, while his younger brother was Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, 1986-98.

The Bramalls' forebears were in the Egyptian cotton trade. Ashley Bramall's grandfather was a wealthy merchant with a home in Belgravia. Ashley's father, Major Bramall, suffered from poor health for much of his later life and his wife, a woman of much drive and imagination, started up some small businesses. One was a garage which sold and serviced only yellow Rolls-Royce motor cars. She was one of the ardent early socialists, long before it was either fashionable or socially acceptable to be so. Still taking a keen interest in politics and a great pride in her sons, she lived to be 97.

Ashley Bramall went to Gibbs Preparatory School in Sloane Street, which was particularly strong in teaching mathematics and also in developing its boys as swimmers. From there he went to Westminster, soon leaving for Canford, the Westminster School doctor having advised a move to the country for health reasons. (His younger brother went to Eton.) From Canford he went up to Magdalen College, Oxford. He came down with a second in Philosophy, Politics and Economics and read for the Bar at the Inner Temple.



Bramall: fairness in political decisions was an article of faith

In 1939 he joined the Northamptonshire Yeomanry and later was transferred to the Reconaissance Corps before being posted to the Staff College. Languages were always a strong suit with him. He knew German well and spoke it fluently. (A love of music had taken him to Germany on holidays before the war.) When the British zone of Germany was established after the war, he was one of those involved in re-creating trade unions under the military government.

Fighting the "bread rationing" by-election at Bexley took him out of the Army, in which he had become a major, in June 1946. The result of the by-election — a drop in its majority from nearly 12,000 to 1,800 — was a shock to Labour. But Bramall was thought to have done well to hold the seat in very difficult circumstances.

His law studies, disrupted by the war, were taken up again by the new MP, and he was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple in 1949. Housing became a special interest and, once he entered local government, this proved to be useful. In 1959 he was appointed an alderman on the Westminster City Council where he was leader of the Labour opposition. In 1961 there began a 27-year membership of the London County Council and its successor, the Greater London Council.

His biggest contribution to Labour Party politics probably lay in his leadership of the Inner London Education Authority from 1970 to 1981. In the metropolis this body had at that time under its charge some 360,000 children and adults in education, several hundred schools plus special colleges and teachers' institutes. The leadership was unpaid and as near full-time for successive incumbents as the chief education officer could make it.

The priority for Bramall was speeding up the merging of comprehensive and grammar schools. He passionately believed that this, more than anything else, would raise the education horizons of the average child.

When Bramall took over, there were 35,000 children in the authority's schools who did not speak English as a first language and 128 different languages were spoken in the schools. This was because of immigration from the Indian sub-continent and the Caribbean in the previous two decades. He sought to increase the quality of education for these pupils by employing a larger number of teachers and specialist staff. This pushed costs well up beyond the national average in state schools but Bramall was only too keenly aware that, unless these children left school with marketable skills, they could spend a lifetime on social security.

He could at times be tough in ways that angered the Left. During a financial crisis in 1979 he called for a £25 million cut from the authority's proposed budget and lost the vote 27-26. He won a subsequent vote for the same cut, while managing to leave intact three things nearest his heart: the pupil-teacher ratio, nursery education and meals for the very needy.

Bramall had corporal punishment abolished after he became Leader of the ILEA. An earlier attempt several years before had been frustrated by the then Education Secretary, the former headmaster Edward Short (now Lord Glenamara), who told Bramall bluntly that such a decision was for teachers, not politicians.

The hard Left reached the peak of its power in London as the result of the GLC elections of 1981 and Bramall was a ricochet victim. Less than 24 hours after the polls closed the Labour caucus had replaced Andrew McIntosh (now Lord McIntosh of Haringey, Deputy Government Chief Whip in the Lords) with Ken Livingstone. Next day Bryn Davies, a young TUC researcher, replaced Bramall as leader of London's education organisation.

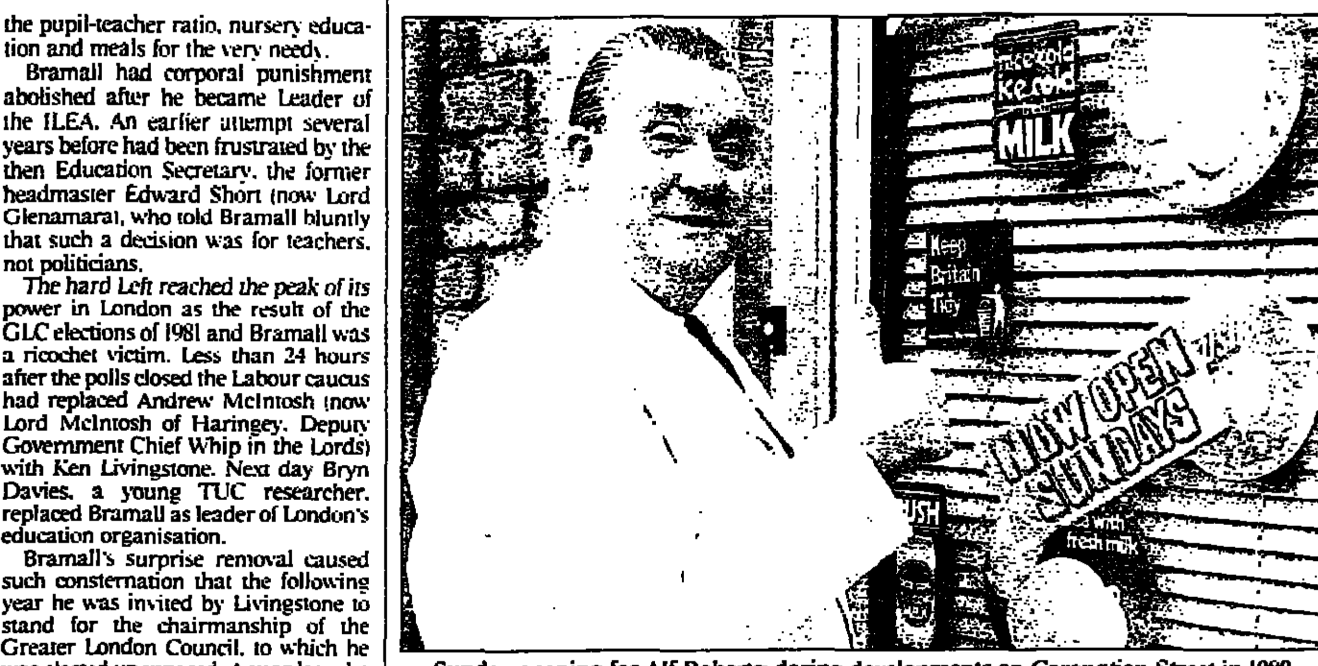
Bramall's surprise removal caused such consternation that the following year he was invited by Livingstone to stand for the chairmanship of the Greater London Council, to which he was elected unopposed. A year later he was invited to stand for the chairmanship of the Inner London Education Authority, which he also won (having been chairman once before, in 1965-67). He was honoured nationally by being elected chairman of the Council of Education Authorities, 1975-76. For five years he was also leader of the employers' side of the Burnham Committee which sets teachers' pay in primary and secondary schools. He was knighted in 1975.

After he finished with active politics he kept up his wide interests both in the arts and education. He was chairman of the National Council for Drama Training, honorary secretary of the Theatres Advisory Council, a governor of the Museum of London, a member of the council of the City University, chairman of the governors of Pimlico School and, until last week, chairman of the Westminster College of Further Education.

Ashley Bramall achieved something that is difficult. He grew old gracefully. Slim, distinguished-looking, with elegant features he had a thick mop of wavy silver hair and always looked younger than his years. Despite the eight years' age difference between them, he was close to his brother, the Field Marshal. Lord Bramall always enjoyed telling the story of how, in the House of Lords, a newly ennobled Tory peer had once come up to him to say that he had been at staff college with his son. "Not my son," responded the former Chief of the Defence Staff, "that was my elder brother."

Ashley Bramall was married twice — first, in 1939, to Margaret Taylor, whom he met at Oxford, but this marriage ended in divorce (she later became director of the National Council for One-Parent Families). He married, secondly, Gery Bloch in 1950 who later joined him in the Labour group on Westminster City Council. There were two sons of the first marriage and one of the second. They and his wife survive him.

BRYAN MOSLEY



Sunday opening for Alf Roberts: daring developments on *Coronation Street* in 1989

Bryan Mosley, OBE, *Coronation Street* actor, died of a heart attack on February 9 aged 67. He was born in Leeds on August 25, 1931.

"I'D LIKE Alf Roberts to burst into the Rovers with a sword in hand and swing dramatically across the bar on a chandelier," Bryan Mosley once said wistfully. It was a remark which confessed to an early fascination with the swashbuckling roles of Errol Flynn, who had been one of Mosley's boyhood heroes.

But, though Mosley was no mean stunt-fight swordsman himself, and had arranged many a stage combat for others, his dream scenario was not to be. Instead, his Alf Roberts, grocer and councillor, was to grow stodgily old in a career of useful public service — one of those diligent and trustworthy functionaries who are the mainstay of small northern towns.

But there were plus sides to this steady deportment. Alf's bank balance and his position in the fictional Weatherfield community, if not his looks — an increasingly portly head topped by repulsive Brylcreemed locks — made him quite a wow with the ladies. He had already been twice married and twice widowed when, in 1985, he was snapped up and led to the altar for the third and last time by the frisky Audrey Potter, played by Sue Nicholls.

True, Audrey was flirting furiously with the local butcher, Fred Elliott, behind Alf's back at the very same party during which Alf died on screen. But there were compensations for Alf in having such a sexy companion to spark up his declining years. And if his wallet was considerably the lighter for such attentions, he learnt not to complain.

Like most "soap" actors, Bryan Mosley had a good grounding in the conventional theatre after training at the Esmé Church Northern Theatre School. After National Service in the RAF he had wide experience of rep in the North of England.

But television was to be his métier and he was in on the ground floor when the medium began expanding as a vehicle for serious and popular drama from the 1950s onwards. He was in a number of *Armchair Theatre* and *Play of the Week* productions and outside his *Coronation Street* work was a familiar and recurrent face to devotees of *Z Cars*, *The Avengers*, *The Saint* and *Doctor Who*.

He had his moments in films, too, with small roles in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *A Kind of Loving* and *Charlie Bubbles*. In *Get Carter* (1971), Mike Hodges's stark screen version of Ted Lewis's novel of Northern gangland life *Jack's Return Home*, he displayed memorably sinister qualities as a Newcastle thug who threatens the protagonist, Michael Caine — until Caine throws him off a roof.

But 1961 was his *annus mirabilis*, launching him into the role with which he was to become totally identified in the public mind over the next 37 years. The very embodiment of unexciting provincial stolidity, Alf Roberts became one of television's most famous shopkeepers, serving twice as Mayor of Weatherfield, once with the Rovers Return barmaid Annie Walker as his Lady Mayoress.

After the death of his first *Coronation Street* wife, Phyllis, in 1972, Alf was given the runaround by the flighty Donna Parker, before finding salvation from her predatory (and financially debilitating) advances in marriage to Renée Bradshaw, in 1978. She, too, was to die, killed in a car crash two years later, and it was with a sense of relief that Alf's fans saw him eventually firmly enmeshed in the toils of the glamorous (if expensive) Audrey Potter. They fell into each other's arms after she had crashed his sports car.

Suitably contrite in the face of his subsequent wrath (ie dissolving into well-timed floods of tears which were immensely flattering to his male ego) she received the accolade of a ring — and the front keys to his house — in December 1985. Mosley was appointed OBE that year.

Alf, always overweight and now companion to a younger and vigorous consort, died of a heart attack in an armchair just as the clock struck midnight last New Year's Eve.

The real-life Bryan Mosley had also had a number of health scares over the years, and eventually had his fatal heart attack while out shopping in Shipley, Yorkshire.

He is survived by his wife Norma and by their three sons and three daughters.

PERSONAL COLUMN

LEGAL NOTICES

BUSINESS SERVICES (LONDON) LIMITED
THE INSOLVENCY ACT AND RULES 1986

In accordance with Rule 4. 106, we, P S Dunn and M P Riley of Horwath Clark Whitehill & Co, Sherlock House, 7 Kenrick Place, London, W1H 3FF, give notice that on 8 February 1999 we were appointed Joint Liquidators of Business Services (London) Limited by resolutions of members and creditors. Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the above named company, which is being voluntarily wound up, are required, on or before 8 April 1999 to send in their full Christian and surnames, their addresses and descriptions, full particulars of their debts or claims, and the names and addresses of their Solicitors, (if any), to the undersigned P S Dunn and M P Riley of Sherlock House, 7 Kenrick Place, London, W1H 3FF, the Joint Liquidators of the said company, and, if so required by notice in writing form the said Joint Liquidators, are personally or by their Solicitors, to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof they will be excluded form the benefit of any distribution.
Dated 8 February 1999.
P S Dunn and M P Riley, Joint Liquidators.

EXBURY ENTERPRISES LIMITED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named company will be held at New Court, St Swithins Lane, London EC4P 4EU on 22 February 1999 at 2.30 pm for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 to 101 of the Insolvency Act 1986. A list of names and addresses of the company's creditors will be available for inspection free of charge at the office of Thomas Eggar Church Adams, 5 East Pallant, Chichester PO19 1TS during the two business days preceding 22 February 1999.
Dated 9 February 1999
By Order of the Board

PUBLIC NOTICES

EASTERN MERCHANT GENERATION LIMITED
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSENT TO EXTEND THE WEST BURTON COAL FIRED POWER STATION, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BY RETROFITTING FLUE GAS DESULPHURISATION (FGD) PLANT

NOTICE IS hereby given that Eastern Merchant Generation Limited ("the Company") has applied under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ("the Act") for the consent of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to Extend the West Burton Coal fired Power Station, Nottinghamshire by retrofitting Flue Gas Desulphurisation Plant and associated equipment, and for a direction under section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act that planning permission for the development be deemed to be granted.

A copy of the application, with a plan showing the land to which it relates, together with a copy of the Environmental Statement discussing the Company's proposals in more detail and presenting an analysis of the environmental implications, are available for inspection during normal working hours at the following address:
Bassetlaw District Council, Queens Buildings, Potter Street, Worksop, Nottingham S80 2AH
Bassetlaw District Council & County Contact, 17 The Square, Retford Notts DN22 6DB.
Retford Library, Churchgate, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 6PE
Gainsborough Library, Cobden Street, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire DN21 2NG
West Burton Power Station, Retford, Nottingham DN22 9BL
In addition copies of the Environmental Statement may be obtained at a cost of £30 plus VAT from Eastern Generation Services Limited, Wherstead Park, PO Box 40, Wherstead, Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 2AQ while stocks last. Free copies of the Non-Technical Summary are also available from Eastern Generation Services Limited while stocks last.
Any objection should be made in writing to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Energy Policy & Analysis, Zone 152, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET, stating the name of the station and the grounds and objection, not later than 25 March 1999.
Date: 11 February 1999

PROFESSOR ROGER WALKER

Professor Roger Walker, Professor of Spanish at Birkbeck College, University of London, died on January 11 aged 60. He was born on July 25, 1938.

OVER the past thirty years, Birkbeck College has produced more than its share of distinguished Hispanists. Roger Walker, with his wide scholarly interests and outstanding administrative service, was among the best.

Roger Michael Walker graduated from Manchester University in 1960 with a first in French and Spanish. After a year of postgraduate study he was appointed to Bristol University, and then, in 1963, he joined Birkbeck's Spanish department. In 1970 he was awarded his doctorate for a study of the early-14th-century *Libro del Cavallero Zifar*. A version of his thesis was published four years later.

By then he had published many articles and edited several collections, and in 1980 he was made a professor. For much of those decades the focus of his research was on medieval Spanish literature. He produced editions of the *Estoria de Santa Maria Egiçiaca* (1972) and of *El Cavallero Plaçidas* (1982), as well as many articles on the *Poema de Mio Cid* and the *Libro de buen amor*. He also published on French medieval literature, and on Portugal's national poet, Camoens.



Walker: outstanding Hispanist and adminstrator

In the 1980s and early 1990s he was heavily involved in administrative duties. He served as head of the six departments of Birkbeck's Centre for Language and Literature, and for five years he was a supremely efficient vice-master of Birkbeck. He also served on London University's Academic Council and its Senate.

Academic and organisational skills combined to make him a fine journal editor. From 1974 until his death he was a key member of the committee of the Modern Humanities Research Association. In 1980 he began an eight-year spell as Hispanic editor of its flagship journal, *Modern Language Review*, and he was also general editor from 1983 to 1993. He was a rigorous, no-nonsense editor who took a close interest in all phases of production and was a familiar figure at the printing works in Leeds.

In the 1990s he was made chairman of the French, Spanish, Russian, and European Studies panels for the 1992 Research Assessment Exercise. He subsequently chaired the Iberian and Latin-American panel for the 1997 exercise.

Although his own research took a back seat during this period, it flourished anew in the last ten years when he began his collaboration with W. H. Liddell on the unpublished papers of the 17th-century diplomat and poet Sir Richard Fanshawe.

To date, a number of articles on Sir Richard's Spanish and Portuguese diplomatic experiences and literary interests have appeared, and later this year a catalogue raisonné of the Fanshawe papers in the Valence House Museum, Dagenham, is scheduled for publication.

Walker maintained an energetic social life and had many friends. He was amusing, easy company, and could hold forth knowledgeably on topics, from plants and shrubs to cricket.

He married Patricia Eccles in 1960, but they were divorced in 1980. In later years he and his partner, Heather Robbins, moved to Harwich, where they were closely involved with the fishing community. For several years he served as president of the Harwich Fishermen's Association, and he was surely one of the few academics to have put to sea in a trawler.

He is survived by Heather Robbins, and by a daughter and son from his marriage.

ON THIS DAY

February 11, 1932

The secret of Edgar Wallace's popularity lay in his gift of spinning plots in a style free from pretentiousness and affectation. His books, like those of his contemporaries Horler, 'Sapper', and 'Seamark' have vanished from booksellers' shelves.

MR EDGAR WALLACE

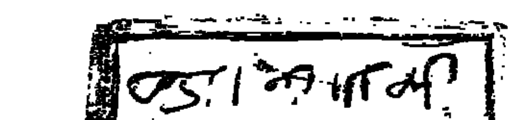
Mr Edgar Wallace, whose death in California, we announce elsewhere today, was born in 1875, of unknown parentage, somewhere in East London, and at nine days old was adopted by a Billingsgate fish porter, named George Freeman and his wife, who lived at or near Deptford . . .

On leaving school he began to earn his living by selling newspapers in the street; his paper was the *Echo* and his pitch in Fleet Street under the Press Club, of which he was later to be chairman. After that he tried many jobs, in printing works, as a newsboy at Smith's bookstall on Ludgate Hill Station, as a hand in a factory, as a boy on a Grimsby trawler, on a milk round, as a builder's "cad". Then he enlisted as a private soldier in the Royal West Kent Regiment and later transferred to the Medical Staff Corps.

It was as a private soldier in that corps that he was sent, in August, 1896, to Simons Town, which gave him special opportunities when the South African War broke out. At Simons Town he was helped and encouraged in his literary ambitions (he was busy writing verses and other things in his spare hours) by the Wesleyan chaplain, Mr Caldecott, and his wife.

He was now drifting rapidly into journalism and criticising the leading political figures with all the assurance of a young and self-educated man. In time he was doing so well that he was advised to take his discharge from the Army and to devote himself to journalism. When the war broke out he was appointed war correspondent, first to Reuter's, and finally to the *Daily Mail*, and showed much ingenuity in disobeying the rules of the censorship and getting news through to London. After the war he stayed for a time in South Africa, editing the *Rand Daily Mail*, of Johannesburg. Then, coming to London, he became a reporter on the *Daily Mail*; and it was in those years that he turned an unsuccessful short story into the book which first made his name known, *The Four Just Men*. Some there are who think that he never wrote anything so good. The book sold in thousands; but it brought the author no profit, since he ruined himself on advertising it at his own expense and then sold it cheap in despair.

But his true career was begun; and thereafter his story becomes more and more closely confined to the number of books which he could produce in a year (or, as *Punch* came later to suggest, in a day). He had a clever and fertile gift of invention, a shrewd Cockney humour, a warm heart, a simple view of life, and an extraordinary knowledge of crime and criminals and police. He had no "ghosts": with his own fertility and the modern appliances, he had no need of them. The score has been reckoned at 150 novels; and these were sold in thousands and read by bishops and professors and Cabinet Ministers, and by errand-boys and tweeny-maids, and all grades of culture in between. Besides the novels there were some 14 plays, of which one, *The Green Pack*, was produced in London on the night of his death in distant Hollywood; and there were several thousand short stories and countless articles.



NEWS

Economy heads to recession

■ Britain will move perilously close to recession over the next few months, the Bank of England admitted as it predicted that growth would be "close to zero" for the first half of this year. Even after that, it expects growth to reach only 0.5 to 1 per cent for 1999 as a whole. The predictions were coupled with a promise to go on cutting rates but Tories accused the Government of driving the economy to the brink of recession...... Page 1

Briton saves avalanche victims

■ A British man risked his life to pull three people to safety from the debris of a chalet ripped from its foundations by the avalanche in the French Alps that claimed 10 lives. Mike Cooper, 48, who has worked as a trail guide in Chamonix for 12 years, used a sledgehammer to smash through eight inches of concrete and then squeezed through the hole...... Pages 1, 5

Gibraltar crisis

Gibraltar was thrown back to the siege of Franco's days when Spain announced that it would ban all drivers with a Gibraltar licence and threatened to stop all flights to the Rock...... Page 1

Railway marking

Only one of Britain's 25 train companies qualified for top marks under a new grading system for the network...... Page 2

Estate invitation

On Sunday, Lady Worcester seemed to issue an open invitation to every "greenie, gypsy and New Age traveller" to set up camp on her father-in-law's Badminton estate...... Page 3

Children's hearts

The hearts of more than 170 children who died after surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary were removed and kept for "educational purposes"...... Page 6

Pension victory

Two pensioners who accused the electricity industry of raiding their pension funds have won a legal battle...... Page 7

Sex shocker

A former marriage guidance counsellor shortlisted for the Romantic Novelist of the Year award said that some of her clients' tales were too unbelievable even for her genre...... Page 8

Viagra savings

Impotence sufferers are saving money on Viagra. Instead of buying pills with the lowest doses, they are buying the strongest and chopping them up...... Page 9

Cost of a QC

Barristers who are promoted to Queen's Counsel are earning an average of £250,000 a year by the time they are appointed...... Page 10

Aids trial

The gulf separating French citizens from the Parisian elite appeared wider than ever as former ministers began giving evidence in their trial for manslaughter in connection with France's contaminated blood scandal...... Page 14

Nazi links

The United Nations and Western intelligence agencies are investigating a link between leading members of South Africa's neo-Nazi movement and President Taylor of Liberia...... Page 15

Not amused

Europe's royal families have started to distance themselves from the International Olympic Committee...... Page 16

After Kinsey

Half a century after the *Kinsey Report* transformed attitudes to sex, nearly half America's women and almost a third of its men still experience sexual problems...... Page 17

Killer may save a nation

■ The return of 'Willy' the killer whale to Iceland may save one of Europe's most prosperous nations from bankruptcy. For as Keiko is trained for release into the Arctic Icelanders are constantly reminded that whales command fierce passions around the world. The huge tourist interest in Keiko's rehabilitation may just stave off resumption of whaling...... Page 13



While most of Europe shivered in the snow yesterday strollers in Estoril, Portugal' enjoyed balmy temperatues of 57°F. Page 5

BUSINESS

Merger collapses: A planned £10.7 billion merger between National Power and United Utilities collapsed on Monday night, it emerged yesterday...... Page 25

Mirror offer: Regional Independent Media are planning to make a formal offer for the Mirror Group later this month, at a price that is unlikely to be above 200p...... Page 25

LucasVarity: Federal-Mogul withdrew its bid to acquire LucasVarity, the car components group, leaving the way clear for TRW to buy the company for £4 billion...... Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 9.70 points to 5770.2. The pound fell 0.77 cents to $1.6277 and 0.46 cents against the euro to 69.63p. The trade-weighted sterling index fell to 100.0 from 100.6...... Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: England threw away a good chance of victory over Australia in Sydney in the first match of the final series of the triangular one-day tournament...... Page 48

Rugby union: Kevin Yates, the Bath player who was suspended for an ear-biting incident last year, has been reported for stamping on an opponent...... Page 45

Golf: Nick Faldo must perform well in the Desert Classic in Dubai this weekend to have any chance of qualifying for the World Golf Championship later this year...... Page 42

Sarah Potter: Karren Brady, the managing director of Birmingham City, has won her battle for acceptance in the male dominated world of football...... Page 42

Cinema 1: After 20 years of semi-obscurity, the director Jack Hill is suddenly in demand after a public homage by Quentin Tarantino, a self-confessed disciple...... Page 34

Cinema 2: Best of the week's new movies, from Roberto Benigni's controversial Oscar-nominated Holocaust comedy, *Life is Beautiful*, to the sex-obsessed *Your Friends & Neighbors*...... Page 35

Storm troopers: At the West Yorkshire Playhouse Ian McKellen leads a strong cast as Prospero in Jude Kelly's lively new staging of *The Tempest*...... Page 36

Panto to Parsifal: The tenor Kim Begley describes how a series of lucky breaks took him from minor acting roles to operatic stardom with his *Parsifal* at ENO...... Page 37

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: Pancreatic transplants; King Hussein's death; St Valentine and epileptics; why adolescents should be vaccinated against meningitis...... Page 18

Life of Spice: Victoria Adams of the Spice Girls and David Beckham the footballer may be the most glamorous young couple in Britain but, they say, they'll just be an ordinary mum and dad...... Page 19

Reviews: Erica Wagner discusses the versatility of Gore Vidal; David Bellamy searches for giant squid; Gerald Jacobs hails the heroes at the heart of the enemy; Roger Scruton looks at the links between music, cosmology and theology; Bel Mooney confronts the fairytale wolf in the darkness...... Pages 38, 39

Best buys: An Easter break, with eggs and champagne and falconry, in Kent; cruising or skiing in Norway; New York or Boston for about £150 return for under-26s...... Page 41

The Senate will deliver a verdict based on acquiescing in his lies. And this will be hailed as right and good. Washington used to believe the President had an obligation to tell the truth; now they believe they have an obligation to help him get away with lies - *Washington Post*

RADIO & TV

Preview: Lifting the ban on ivory: *Horizon* (BBC-2, 9.30pm) **Review:** Joe Joseph finds heartbreak hitting people like a truck...... Pages 46, 47

OPINION

Islam's Luther

Twenty years ago an elderly, irascible Muslim cleric returned from 20 years exile and loosed a whirlwind in Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution produced a realignment of political forces...... Page 21

Go north, young man

The content of George W. Bush's "compassionate conservatism" is not suitable for export. If the slogan sounds like his father's call for a "kinder, gentler, America", the detailed provision is not...... Page 21

Faking it

Birds do it, bees do it. President Clinton cannot stop himself doing it; but, it seems, many Americans do not. The latest survey from behind America's bedroom door reveals that surprisingly few regularly engage in sex...... Page 21

ANATOLE KALETSKY

Until Europe has a proper democratic constitution, it will be impossible to claim that the interests of voters are represented by commissioners, central bankers and other senior officials...... Page 20

MAGNUS LINKLATER

Ceremony is one of the things the British are meant to be good at, and on July 1 comes a great occasion which cries out for it. Only this time, instead of careful planning, signs are beginning to emerge that we may make a mess...... Page 20

MICHAEL FALLON

True Conservatism lies far beyond London SW1, out in our towns and shires. To refresh itself the Tory party has to reconnect with the deeper instincts of a country that has never recognised the moral superiority of Whitehall...... Page 20

Sir Ashley Bramall, politician; **Bryan Mosley**, actor; **Roger Walker**, professor of Spanish...... Page 23

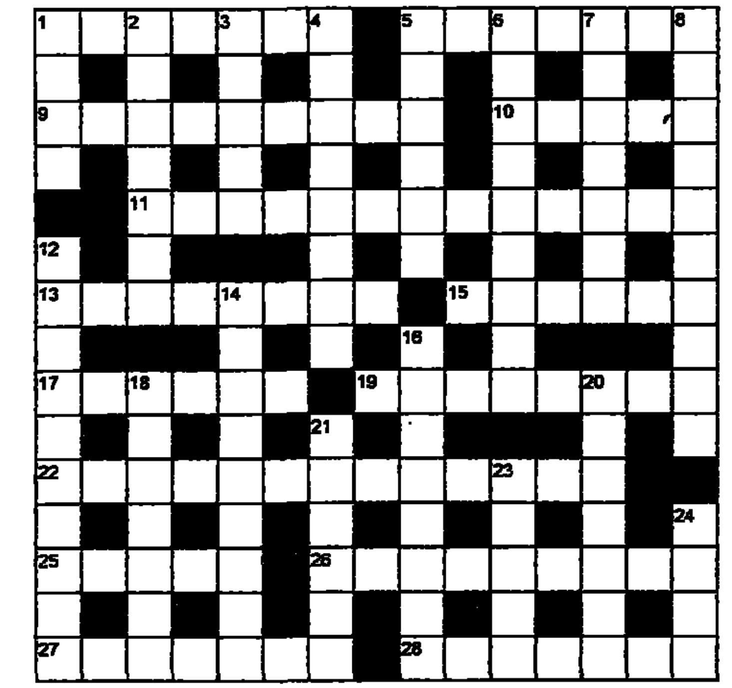
Blair's Third Way compared with Third Reich; Iran blocks Bahai education; Zimbabwe judges...... Page 21

TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

■ **MEDIA**
How does a new newspaper tackle a well-established rival in a crowded market?

■ **EDUCATION**
Long, lazy summer holidays will be only a memory if five-term campaigners succeed

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,024



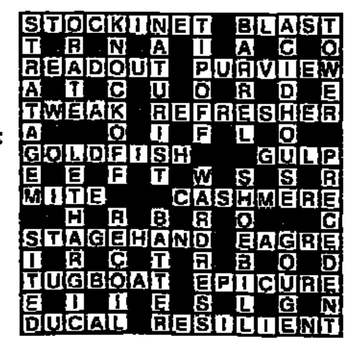
ACROSS

1 Share rooms as house turned somewhat cold at first (7).
5 Being divorced? On your head be it (7).
9 Mark my words (9).
10 Getting some boll-weevil is lethal for cotton (5).
11 One's left army job – press one to join up when the heat is on (9,4).
13 Use Franklin's experimental method to test opinion (3,1,4).
15 I dust, moving round in room (6).
17 Caring type has gone to other extremes (6).
19 Has round trip to American state (8).
22 Hit-and-miss procedure producing miscarriage of justice? (5,3,5).
25 At one time I was first, but stopped making an effort (5).
26 Nothing needing to be paid yet? That's OK (9).
27 Chap covering sleeve of coat, for example (7).
28 Author labours after one's rejected play (7).

DOWN

1 Policeman is on to drug deal (4).
2 Find refuge in boat – that's the most advisable policy (7).
3 We hear insect chewed leaf (5).
4 Mock Turtle's first at party, a scene of debauchery (8).
5 Summary showing one switch in prices (6).
6 Put down, say, in similar surroundings (9).
7 Accustomed to admit head of security under cover (7).
8 Some may be forced inside it – the effect is disastrous (10).
12 Cancelling a bit of golf? That's unpleasant (3-7).
14 What one discovers – it's not safe to be small (9).
16 Isn't it ever left rumpled in bed? (8).
18 Son's taken over helm, it being less stormy (7).
20 Unusual piece of information revealing regional dish (7).
21 Constant is given for child's second name, actually (2,4).
23 Part of rider's equipment, lower if you switch sides (5).
24 Some girls quail when in a group (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,023



Times Two Crossword, page 48

AA INFORMATION

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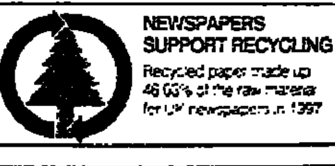
HOURS OF DARKNESS

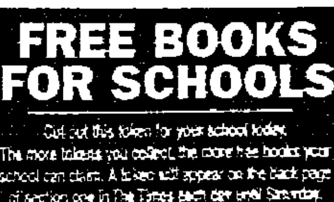
Sun rises: 7.22 am — Sun sets: 5.07 pm

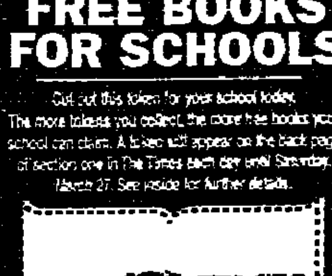
Moon sets: 12.34 pm — Moon rises: 3.40 am

New moon Feb 16

London 5.07 pm to 7.20 am
Bristol 5.17pm to 7.31 am
Edinburgh 5.07 pm to 7.46 am
Manchester 5.11 pm to 7.35 am
Penzance 5.33 pm to 7.39 am







FORECAST

☐ **General:** England and Wales will stay cold with the early frost only slowly lifting. Most places will be dry with some sunshine, the best of it this morning, but there is the slight risk of a sleet or snow shower across East Anglia.

Eastern Scotland will be a little milder than recently with plenty of sunshine. Western Scotland cloudy; some drizzle is possible over the Western Isles and the coast of the mainland. Northern Ireland will have sunny spells but cloud will increase later. The Republic of Ireland will be rather cloudy but mainly dry.

Tonight, cloud and rain will slowly spread southeastwards across Scotland and Northern Ireland into northern parts of England, Wales, and perhaps some western regions later, too, and in these areas it will be a little milder than on recent nights.

The south and east of England will be dry, cold and frosty tonight.

☐ **London, SE England, Central S England, Midlands:** a hard frost at first and staying rather cold. Dry with some sunshine. Light northwesterly wind. Max 6C (43F)

☐ **E Anglia, E England:** cold with a frosty morning. Occasional sunny spells and only the slight risk of a fleeting wintry shower. Moderate NW wind. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Channel Islands, SW England, S Wales:** a sharp frost inland and staying chilly. Dry with some sunshine. Light and variable breeze. Max 7C (45F).

☐ **N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, NE England:** a frosty start and staying chilly. Dry with some sunshine but rather cloudy both early and late. Light northwesterly wind backing westerly. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth:** a frosty, sunny start. Spells of sunshine throughout; staying cold. Light to moderate westerly wind. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, N Ireland:** a frosty start. Some sunshine but clouding over this afternoon. Light westerly wind backing moderate southwesterly. Max 7C (45F).

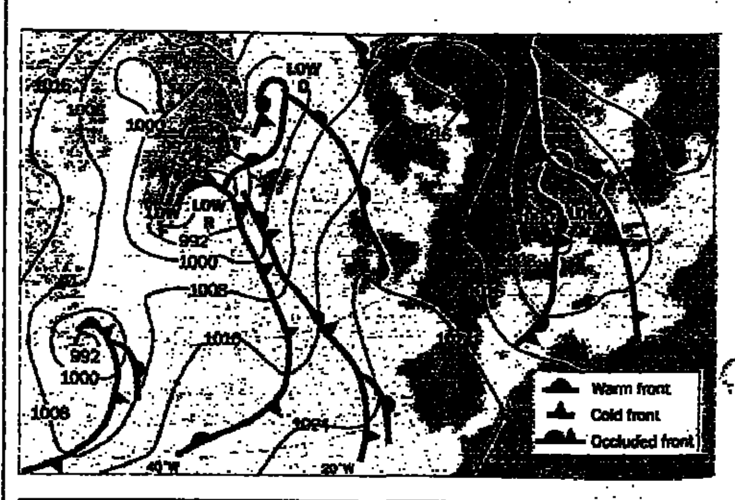
☐ **Central Highlands, NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** mostly cloudy with some light rain or drizzle now and then, perhaps sleet at first. Moderate westerly wind backing southwesterly. Max 7C (45F)

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** rather cloudy, mainly dry; the odd spot of rain in the west. Light northwesterly wind backing southwesterly. Max 7C (45F)

☐ **Outlook:** cloud and rain in the north and west tomorrow will slowly move southeast during the afternoon and it will get milder. The southeast will stay bright and cold until later on Saturday.



Changes to the chart below from noon: low N will move little and fill. Low O and complex lows F and R will all run northeast and deepen. Pressure will, however, remain relatively high over much of Europe



AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, ds=dust storm, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, g=gales, h=hail, r=rain, sh=shower, sl=sleet, s=sun, t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	3.9	0.24	2	36	sn	Kinloss	1.5	0.02	3	37	c
Anglesey	4.2	0.13	5	41	h	Leeds	7.2	-	5	41	s
Aspatria	7.2	-	5	41	s	Lerwick	2.9	0.20	1	34	sn
Aviemore	-	0.04	2	36	sn	Leuchars	2.9	0.20	1	34	sn
Belfast	0.3	0.02	4	39	sn	Littlehampton	7.8	-	4	39	s
Birmingham	7.4	-	4	39	s	London	3.3	-	4	39	b
Bognor R	9.0	-	5	41	s	Lowestoft	5.0	0.10	3	37	sn
Bournemth	8.6	-	5	41	s	Manchester	8.4	-	5	41	s
Bristol	8.8	-	6	43	s	Margate	5.1	-	3	37	s
Buxton	7.9	-	2	36	s	Morecambe	8.4	-	5	41	s
Cardiff	8.0	-	7	45	s	Newcastle	7.8	0.03	4	39	s
Clacton	6.5	-	3	37	s	Newquay	2.9	0.09	5	41	sn
Cleethorpes	1.4	0.20	3	37	sn	Oxford	8.9	-	5	41	s
Colwyn Bay	7.0	0.01	5	41	s	Penzance	5.5	0.03	8	46	h
Cromer	4.3	0.07	4	39	sl	Poole	8.7	-	5	41	s
Eastbourne	8.9	0.01	4	39	s	Prestatyn	7.9	-	5	41	s
Edinburgh	6.5	-	6	43	s	Ross on Wye	8.0	-	6	43	s
Eskdalemuir	7.3	-	3	37	s	Saunton Sands	6.9	0.17	7	45	s
Exmouth	9.1	0.01	5	41	s	Scarborough	4.2	0.31	3	37	sn
Fishguard	4.1	0.28	5	41	h	Shrewsbury	6.2	0.01	3	37	s
Folkestone	8.3	0.01	4	39	s	Skegness	3.0	0.16	2	36	sn
Glasgow	4.3	-	5	41	b	Southend	5.5	-	3	37	s
Guernsey	7.8	0.01	9	48	s	Southport	x	0.01	5	41	b
Hastings	7.4	0.01	4	39	s	Stornoway	3.5	0.01	3	37	sn
Hayling I.	[illegible]		5	41	s	Swanage	6.6	-	5	41	s
Herne Bay	2.9	-	3	37	b	Teignmouth	9.2	0.13	5	41	s
Hove	5.6	-	5	41	s	Tenby	6.4	0.24	5	41	sh
Hunstanton	0.6	0.14	2	36	sn	Tiree	0.1	0.01	5	41	c
Isle of Man	[illegible]	-	6	43	s	Torquay	8.6	0.03	7	45	s
Isle of Wight	x	-	4	39	s	Weymouth	9.0	-	6	43	s
Jersey	7.9	0.08	6	43	s						

ABROAD

	C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F	
Ajaccio	13	55	c	Cologne	-1	30	c	Madrid	8	46	f	Rome	13	55	f
Akrotiri	18	64	f	C'phagn	-2	29	s	Majorca	15	59	f	Salzburg	-3	27	f
Alex'dria	19	66	s	Corfu	11	52	s	Malaga	16	61	s	S Frisco	8	46	f
Algiers	19	66	s	Dublin	2	36	c	Malta	14	57	c	Santiago	x		
Amst'dm	2	36	s	Dubrovnik	7	45	f	Melbourne	24	75	c	S Paulo	x		
Athens	14	57	s	Faro	13	55	c	Mexico C	21	70	s	Seoul	5	41	f
Bahrain	21	70	f	Florence	12	54	f	Miami	27	81	c	Singapore	30	86	f
Bangkok	30	86	s	Frankfurt	1	34	s	Milan	5	41	c	Stockholm	-6	21	f
Barbados	28	82	f	Funchal	18	64	f	Montreal	-7	19	c	Strasb'rg	0	32	c
Barcelona	15	61	f	Geneva	4	39	f	Moscow	-7	19	f	Sydney	23	73	c
Beijing	6	43	c	Gibraltar	15	59	f	Munich	-4	25	sn	Tangier	13	55	c
Beirut	16	61	f	Helsinki	-16	3	s	Nairobi	29	84	s	Tel Aviv	18	64	s
Belgrade	2	36	c	Hong K	21	70	s	Naples	12	54	f	Tenerife	20	68	c
Berlin	0	32	sn	Innsbruck	-3	27	f	N Delhi	18	64	f	Tokyo	11	52	s
Bermuda	22	65	f	Istanbul	6	43	s	N York	4	39	f	Toronto	6	43	s
Biarritz	8	46	f	Jeddah	28	82	s	Nice	12	54	s	Tunis	17	63	s
Bordeaux	5	41	c	Jo'burg	25	77	f	Oslo	-11	12	sn	Valencia	13	55	s
Brussels	0	32	c	L Palmas	19	66	c	Paris	2	36	sn	Vanc'ver	3	37	f
Budapest	1	34	f	Le Touquet	2	36	f	Perth	28	82	s	Venice	2	36	f
B Aires	27	81	s	Lisbon	12	54	f	Prague	-4	25	s	Vienna	3	37	f
Cairo	19	66	s	Locarno	-1	30	f	Reykjavik	-2	28	f	Warsaw	-1	30	c
Cape Tn	28	82	s	L Angeles	14	57	f	Rhodes	15	59	f	Wash'ton	11	52	f
Chicago	10	50	f	Luxembg	-1	30	f	Rio de J	32	90	f	Wellington	24	75	x
Ch'church	x			Luxor	24	75	s	Riyadh	22	72	f	Zurich	-2	28	sn

Temperatures at midday local time. x = not available

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	9:43	3.4	22:21	3.4	Liverpool	7:14	7.2	19:51	7.2
Avonmouth	2:33	9.4	15:09	9.7	London Bridge	9:35	5.5	22:03	5.7
Belfast	7:11	2.9	19:36	2.9	Lowestoft	5:24	2.1	18:11	2.1
Cardiff	2:19	8.9	14:55	9.1	Margate	7:54	3.7	20:28	3.9
Devonport	1:12	4.4	13:47	4.4	Milford Haven	2:00	5.0	14:35	5.0
Dover	7:06	5.1	19:50	5.2	Newquay	1:00	5.1	13:34	5.2
Dublin	7:59	3.4	20:36	3.4	Oban	2:25	3.0	14:48	3.0
Falmouth	0:43	4.2	13:18	4.2	Penzance	0:36	4.2	13:09	4.3
Greenock	8:56	2.6	20:44	2.5	Portland	2:09	1.2	14:51	1.2
Harwich	7:31	2.9	20:12	3.0	Portsmouth	7:27	3.7	20:15	3.7
Holyhead	6:39	4.4	19:15	4.4	Shoreham	7:03	4.6	19:45	4.6
Hull (Albert D)	1:57	6.9	14:33	7.0	Southampton	6:56	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.6
Ilfracombe	1:38	6.6	14:12	6.7	Swansea	1:55	9.9	14:33	10.0
King's Lynn	2:21	4.6	15:10	4.7	Tees	-	-	12:02	8.9
Leith	10:36	4.3	23:24	4.4	Walton-On-Naze	7:27	3.2	20:09	3.3

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: highest day max: Guernsey, 9C (48F); lowest day max: Loch Glascarnoch, Highland, 0C (32F); highest rainfall: Pembrey Sands, Carmarthenshire, 0.38in; most sunshine: Teignmouth, Devon, 9.2hr

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THE TIMES

The man who inspired Tarantino
Films, Page 34

2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11 1999

Fall in sterling opens way for fresh base rate cut

By Janet Bush
Economics Editor

THE pound slumped yesterday after the Bank of England downgraded its growth forecast for this year and left the way open for further cuts in interest rates.

Sterling fell to $1.6295 from $1.6365 in late trading on Tuesday and also slipped against the euro to 0.6950 to the euro from 0.6903 on Tuesday. The pound ended at 100 on its effective index against a basket of currencies, down from 100.6 at the finish on Tuesday. At one stage it fell to 99.9.

In its latest quarterly *Inflation Report* the Bank said that it now expects growth this year of between 0.5 per cent and 1 per cent, down from its previous forecast of growth somewhat above 1 per cent.

It said that growth would be near to zero in the first half of this year.

However, the Bank said that the Monetary Policy Committee was not in a monetary policy "pause" after last week's 0.5 per cent cut in base rates to 5.5 per cent. It said that, since its report in November, the world economy had deteriorated, that there had been a more marked slowdown in domestic demand and that inflationary pressures had eased further.

Despite the hope of further rate cuts to stave off outright recession, London shares closed down for the sixth session in a row, undermined by nerves on Wall Street about the overvaluation of technology stocks. There was also some concern in London about impending bank profits announcements.

The FTSE 100 index closed down 9.7 points at 5,770.2, having dipped below the 5,700 at one point during midday trading. Its afternoon recovery came as the Dow Jones Industrial Average registered a gain of more than 50 points after Tuesday's fall of 1.7 per cent that wiped out all of its 1999 gains so far. The Dow then returned to negative territory, posting a loss of nearly 30 points at mid-session.

On British interest rate futures markets traders priced in further rate cuts. Several City economists are predicting that base rates will fall to 4.50 per cent from the 5.50 per cent level reached after last week's cut.

LINKS
WEBSITE: (Bank of England)
http://www.bankofengland.co.uk

TRW in line to win £4bn battle for Lucas

By Paul Durman

TRW, the American car components group, looked set to win the battle for LucasVarity last night after Federal-Mogul decided not to top its rival's £4 billion offer.

Federal-Mogul said that, after extensive due diligence, it had decided that acquiring LucasVarity would not make financial sense.

TRW, which makes steering systems and air bags, has made an offer of 288p in cash for each LucasVarity share. The company has hinted that it could afford to offer more because of the synergies it sees in combining with LucasVarity, which makes braking, fuel injection and electronic systems.

This made it difficult for Federal-Mogul to come up with a knockout bid. Dick Snell, the Federal-Mogul chairman and chief executive, had proposed an offer of 280p a share for LucasVarity, but half of this was in the form of shares, which were unattractive to UK shareholders. It is thought that Federal-Mogul was unwilling to pay more than 300p a share for LucasVarity.

TRW's offer proposes that Victor Rice, LucasVarity's controversial chief executive, will take over as head of the group's combined automotive operations. It is also expected to make him about £17 million, the bulk of this in shares and options acquired since he took control of Varity's predecessor in 1980.

Mr Snell believed LucasVarity would have made "a very nice strategic fit" with Federal-Mogul's businesses making connecting rods, engine bearings, seals and camshafts. However, Federal-Mogul decided it could not make an offer that would meet its hurdles for economic value-added, cash flow, short-term earnings and debt/equity ratios.

LucasVarity was formed from a 1996 merger between Varity and Lucas Industries, one of the best-known names in British engineering. LucasVarity suffered a troubled time on the London stock market. Last November, Mr Rice attempted unsuccessfully to move LucasVarity's domicile and main market listing to the US.

United Utilities pulls plug on £10.7bn Nat Power deal

By Christine Buckley
Industrial Correspondent

A £10.7 BILLION merger of National Power and United Utilities has collapsed, it emerged yesterday.

United Utilities, the electricity and water company based in the North West of England, is said to have quit the deal that would have created a giant power company capable of rivaling Scottish Power's customer base and beating those of Eastern Group and PowerGen.

United is thought to have feared that the deal would not have boosted its value. The merger, which was aborted late on Monday, was intended to be a genuine, no-premium tie-up. It would have given National Power a greater inroad into the domestic market and United an important partner as the power industry consolidates. However, it may have run into regulatory obstacles as the combined group would have had generation capacity and two of the biggest electricity supply businesses. National Power already owns the Midlands supply operation.

Both sides were forced to announce the failed merger yesterday because, ironically, the market began to trade on rumours that a merger was imminent on Tuesday afternoon. Both issued short statements to the Stock Exchange confirming the talks and their demise. National Power shares rose 11½p to 511½p and United Utilities rose 9p to 812p.

The planned merger surprised the City because National Power had signalled that it was keen to buy electricity supply businesses and had not been thought likely to go for a multi-utility. If the generator had been successful with United, it would have taken on electricity distribution, and also water, in which it has no expertise.

Nigel Hawkins, analyst at Williams de Broë, said: "It is a curious situation. It would have been a leap forward for National Power to take on United's distribution arm and a bigger leap to go into water."

When National Power bought the Midlands supply business last November in a £180 million deal, it said it wanted to buy other supply businesses. The Government is working on plans to force separation of the two functions and the market is expecting a fresh round of consolidation in the power industry.

National Power, which has been spending prolifically overseas, will soon have a cash boost from the enforced sale of power stations demanded by the Government. A sale of Drax in North Yorkshire would raise more than £2 billion.

The failure of the merger will raise the prospect of United finding a fresh partner or predator. As a purely local company, it is poorly placed to play the increasingly national power supply game. As a multi-utility it also has double exposure to regulatory crackdowns.

National Power may target Scottish and Southern Energy, formed via the merger of Scottish Hydro-Electric and Southern Electricity, or Hyder, the Welsh multi-utility. However, these two are likely to raise regulatory concerns. Although some would hold up ScottishPower as a precedent for large expansion in utilities, the Scottish company has a smaller share of power generation.

Commentary, page 27

DAVID CHESKIN / PA

BP Amoco has confirmed that 400 jobs — nearly a fifth of the workforce — are to go at its petro-chemical plant at Grangemouth, Stirlingshire. Story, page 26

Business Today



The risk business
Foreign banks continue to be casualties in China
Page 29

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5770.2	(-9.7)
Yield	2.79%	
FTSE All Share	2665.16	(-5.54)
Nikkei	13952.40	(+49.74)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9127.88	(-5.15)*
S&P Composite	1217.47	(+1.32)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4¾%*	(4¾%)
Long bond	98[illegible]*	(99[illegible])
Yield	5.33%*	(5.30%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	5[illegible]%	(5[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	118.53	(118.70)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6293	(1.6380)
London:		
$	1.6290	(1.6368)
€	1.4388	(1.4485)
SFr	2.2972	(2.3188)
Yen	186.71	(187.22)
£ Index	100.0	(100.6)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.1331*	(1.3007)
SFr	1.4090*	(1.4167)
Yen	114.45*	(113.90)
$ index	104.9	(104.9)

Tokyo close Yen 115.29

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Apr)	$10.40	($10.30)

GOLD

London close	$287.75	($287.05)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates .... Page 26

RIM poised to bid for Mirror

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

REGIONAL Independent Media, publisher of the *Yorkshire Post*, is poised to make a formal offer for Mirror Group before the end of this month

The offer, however, is thought unlikely to be much higher than the 200p a share cash offer already suggested, once RIM completes its due diligence investigation of Mirror's accounts. Some RIM advisers are even suggesting that, on the information available so far, it may be difficult to sustain a 200p offer.

RIM, which is backed by venture capital from Candover, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell and the Soros Group and headed by Chris Oakley, a former board member of Mirror, is the only company involved in a process of going through confidential Mirror information at the moment.

RIM's main rival, Trinity, the UK's largest regional newspaper group, is not currently carrying out due diligence at the Mirror. It withdrew from talks last month after suggesting an all-share offer worth about 160p at the time.

Trinity is, however, understood to be still interested in the Mirror and could make an improved offer before the end of the month. A bid from either party is certain to be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

If RIM wins Mirror Group the strategy will be to concentrate entirely on the newspaper businesses. The Mirror's 20 per cent stake in Scottish Media would be sold and Live TV either closed or sold if a buyer could be found.

A RIM-owned Mirror would also not go ahead with the relaunch of *The Sporting Life* and instead concentrate on trying to revive the *Sunday Mirror* and *The People* which have both been losing circulation. The Mirror itself has managed modest circulation gains in recent months against a declining market. The aim would be to differentiate the two Sunday papers more with the Sunday Mirror moving up-market and *The People* concentrating more on competing as a second title in the *News of the World* market.

The market does not seem to be expecting any large additional premium — the Mirror share price yesterday was unchanged at 201½p.

Speed-up plan over pensions

By Richard Miles

FINANCIAL regulators yesterday unveiled plans to speed up the payment of redress to an estimated 1.8 million younger victims of the personal pensions mis-selling scandal.

The victims — people who took out a personal pension between April 1988 and June 1994, even though they were entitled to join an occupational scheme — are in line for compensation averaging £4,000.

Life insurance companies, however, can offer redress to personal pension policyholders only if it can be proven that the individuals suffered a financial loss by failing to join the employers' scheme.

Faced with the prospect of long delays while the life insurers unravel policyholders' records, the Financial Services Authority and the Personal Investment Authority have given their support to the industry's proposals to simplify the calculation for financial loss by introducing a "multiplier test".

The FSA has already sought to improve awareness of mis-selling by spending £10 million on a direct mail and advertising campaign, funded by a levy on the industry. The campaign includes the dispatch of some three million letters to possible victims under the heading: "R U Owed?"

Regulators have already investigated the cases of policyholders who were aged 35 or over when they were lured into personal pensions, with 388,000 people being offered compensation of £2 billion.

As the scandal has grown to cover more than two million people, industry analysts have ugraded their estimates of the costs to life insurance companies. Current figures put the total bill between £11 billion and £22 billion.

Commentary, pag. 27

'Changing market' hits Psion

By Chris Ayres

SHARES in Psion took a further battering yesterday when the palmtop computer manufacturer said that profits in 1999 would be severely hit by "changing market conditions". The shares fell 115p to 832½p.

The shares were hit earlier this week by an alliance between British Telecom and Microsoft, which threatened Psion's Symbian joint venture with Ericsson, Nokia and Motorola, the mobile phone handset manufacturers.

Psion's latest problems are at its Dacom subsidiary, which produces PC cards for laptop computers. The company has seen a massive fall in demand for PC cards that allow laptops to access the Internet, because laptop manufacturers have been building the cards into their products.

Tempus, page 28

Research chief replaced at SB

By Paul Durman

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM yesterday replaced its head of research and development after only 18 months in the job.

David U'Prichard is succeeded by Tadataka Yamada — head of the American healthcare services business whose sale for $2 billion (£1.2 billion) was announced on Tuesday.

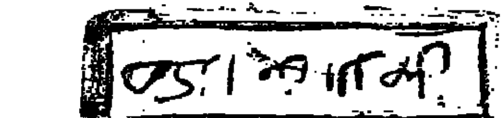
It was suggested that Dr U'Prichard, who joined from Zeneca, was a "loner" who was out of place amid the openness shared by SB's senior team. Although he had a decent record of bringing new products through the development pipeline, there were doubts about his leadership abilities.

Unlike Dr U'Prichard, Dr Yamada is already a member of the SB board, and in 1997 was paid £414,000, including a £131,000 bonus. Dr Yamada, 53, was born in Tokyo, but has spent much of his career in the US, where he attended Stanford and the New York University School of Medicine. SB said he has published more than 200 scientific articles, many on peptide biology.

Dr Yamada will report to Jean-Pierre Garnier, SB's chief operating officer. George Poste continues in his more strategic role as chief scientific and technology officer, reporting to Jan Leschly, chief executive.

Dr Yamada joined SB's board in 1994. Dr Garnier said: "Tachi has a rare blend of business and scientific experience that make him extraordinarily well-qualified to lead our research and development team."

He had responsibility for Diversified Pharmaceutical Services, the US drug purchasing manager, which SB is selling for $700 million, a deal that will incur a £446 million post-tax loss. He also oversaw Clinical Laboratories, the blood and urine-testing business where the group is selling a 70 per cent stake for $1.025 billion.



Insurance firm sees less risk in property

By Marianne Curphey, Insurance Correspondent

LIBERTY International, the life insurance company chaired by Donald Gordon, the South African insurance businessman, said yesterday that the prospects looked brighter for property than for financial services in Britain.

Unveiling results for the year ended December 1998, Mr Gordon said profits before tax and exceptional items had increased by 14 per cent from £111.2 million to £126.5 million.

Liberty International is part of Mr Gordon's Liberty Life group and has a financial services division and the 72 per cent owned subsidiary, Capital Shopping Centres. Liberty Life is expected to merge with Standard Bank Investment Corp of South Africa.

David Fischel, managing director of Liberty International, said he was still keen to expand the group's financial services operations in the UK, but was wary of the damage that fluctating economic conditions could inflict on banking stocks.

He said: "We looked at National Provident Institution (NPI) when it announced its intention to demutualise and placed an indicative bid, but we did not get past the first stage.

"In current market conditions a big deal is unlikely," he said. "The yields on property are currently 6 per cent while those on bonds are 4.3 per cent. At the moment we think we can do better in the property market where there is less risk."

In his statement to shareholders Mr Gordon said 1999 "seems to be shaping up for problems arising from Latin America, China and particularly Hong Kong which is holding on relentlessly to its dollar peg. Europe appears perilously close to deflation.

"Only the United States economy seems to be immune, and subject to ongoing prosperity, with Wall Street flirting with dangerously high levels supported by unbounded optimism".

He said that while a degree of caution was understandable in the light of the property crash of the late 1980s, "the prospects for UK property outperforming other UK asset classes over the forthcoming period seem strong".

A final ordinary dividend of 10.2p (1997: 9.6p) lifted the total to 19p from 17.6p. The shares fell 12½p to 456½p yesterday.

Last week Mr Gordon announced that he was retiring from Liberty Life but would continue as chairman of Liberty International and CSC.

PETER TREVNOR



Kings of the Castle: SAB's Graham Mackay flanked by Nigel Cox, left, and Malcolm Wyman

SAB eyes £4bn London listing

By Dominic Walsh

SOUTH African Breweries, which yesterday unveiled plans for a £4 billion London listing, is expected to spin off its hotel and casino interests to focus on its core beer business.

SAB, which will enter the FTSE 100 index, owns Southern Sun, one of Africa's biggest hoteliers. It operates 75 hotels, owning the South African rights to the Holiday Inn and Inter-Continental brands under an agreement with Bass.

Graham Mackay, SAB's chief executive, admitted that floating off some or all of Southern Sun was a possibility. However, no decision would be taken until the five casino licences for which it has applied — it has already won three — have been awarded by the South African gaming authorities.

An exit from hotels and casinos would be a natural progression for a company that over the past two years has divested eight businesses worth R1.4 billion (£140 million).

SAB, whose group finance director is Nigel Cox, with Malcolm Wyman the corporate finance director, is the world's fourth-largest brewer. It has 37 breweries in 18 countries and 98 per cent of the South African market. Its lagers, including Lion and Castle, sell for about 20p a pint in its home market.

Up to £200 million will be raised in the placing, organised by Robert Fleming, Cazenove and Goldman Sachs, to boost its central and eastern European brewing operations, notably in Poland. It is also building a brewery in Russia.

City diary, page 29

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Alcatel hopes to agree stock swap

ALCATEL, the French electricals company, has held talks with the Government in Paris over the possibility of a swap of its 44 per cent stake in Framatome, the state-controlled nuclear power plant construction company, for a 20 per cent interest in Thomson-CSF, the defence contractor. Alcatel is believed to want to convert its share of Framatome into a more liquid investment which can be sold. Alcatel already owns 16 per cent of Thomson-CSF and a swap of its Framatome shares for Thomson-CSF stock would potentially put up for grabs a 36 per cent stake in a key French defence company.

Such a move could create an opening for the French Government to revive moves to consolidate the Euoropean defence sector. An enlarged Alcatel stake looking for a home would be a useful bargaining chip for Thomson-CSF when negotiating with prospective partners. The French Government retains 42 per cent of Thomson-CSF and has already conceded that it will reduce its interest in the defence contractor if necessary. Alcatel is also thought to have pursued another option of swapping its Framatome shares for assets, in particular the electronic connectors business of Framatome.

Eclipse Blinds in talks

ECLIPSE BLINDS, a maker of components for household blinds, responded to a 52 per cent leap in its share price by admitting that it was in talks that may lead to an offer for the company. The shares rose 30p to 87½p. Ted Black, chairman, said the discussions were at a "very early stage" and that because the company is highly geared and it had expanded by acquisitions, a parent with "deep pockets" would be "useful". The company issued a profits warning in November, which was followed by cost-cutting measures, including redundancies.

Decline at Viglen

VIGLEN TECHNOLOGY, the computer company chaired by Alan Sugar, said that a "competitive" PC market was to blame for a decline in sales and average selling prices. Pre-tax profit for the six months to December 31 was £2.5 million, against £1.8 million for the comparable five-month period last year, on a turnover of £47 million (£40.2 million). Earnings per share were 1.32p (1.02p); the interim dividend of 0.4p is maintained. Mr Sugar said: "With our focus now firmly aimed on education, the Government's initiatives in schools should create substantial opportunities."

Select acquisitions

SELECT APPOINTMENTS, the recruitment group, yesterday announced two overseas acquisitions in the accounting and finance sectors, sending its shares 5 per cent higher to 616½p. The company has bought a 75 per cent interest in Link Recruitment Group which has five offices in Australia for A$11.6 million (£4.5 million) while in The Netherlands, Select has acquired a 60 per cent interest in Cannock Chase Capital, a provider of professional credit control managers, for 4.2 million guilders (£1.3 million).

Newscom in for P&S

THE QUEUE forming to buy Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers lengthened yesterday when News Communication & Media, the group formerly known as Southern Newspapers, said it was in talks to buy the group. Newscom, based in Southampton and with papers throughout the South of England, said that it had applied to the Department of Trade and Industry to have its interest in P&S referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission alongside Johnston Press and Newsquest, who are also stalking the group.

Doyle approached

DOYLE HOTEL GROUP, the privately owned Irish hotel operator that is in takeover talks with its quoted rival, Jurys Hotel Group, is understood to have received a number of approaches from other parties. The approaches, believed to include one from Starwood Hotels & Resorts, the US group, are said to have been prompted by delays to the signing of a deal with Jurys, which is understood to have offered about £160 million. However, Doyle claimed last night that "discussions with Jurys are ongoing" and it hoped to unveil a deal by the end of the month.

JSB ahead of budget

JSB SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGIES, which produces software to stop employees looking at Internet sites not related to their work, yesterday said that its first interim results, since its flotation on AIM last June, were ahead of budget. The company recorded a pre-tax loss of £373,000, for the six months to November 30, compared with a profit of £6,000 for the year ended May 31, 1998. JSB said that since flotation it had invested heavily in marketing its *surf*CONTROL product in the US. JSB forecasts a full-year loss of £1.1 million. The shares fell 12½p to 230p.

US sales boost P&U

PHARMACIA & UPJOHN, the Swedish-American drugs company, lifted fourth-quarter profits 29 per cent to $235 million (£145 million), helped by strong US sales, and reaffirmed that it expected double-digit earnings growth in 1999 and beyond. Global sales rose 9 per cent to $1.85 billion. The company took $144 million in pre-tax charges, of which $92 million came from a previously announced restructuring and $52 million from the sale of most of its nutrition business to Fresenius. The charges were the final portion of a $450 million restructuring programme initiated in 1997.

Citigroup drops Visa

CITIGROUP, the world's biggest financial institution, yesterday resigned from Visa International's board and will move most of its credit cards to Mastercard. Citibank, a subsidiary, is one of the largest credit card issuers with just under $70 billion (£43.2 billion) in credit card receivables. John Reed, co-chairman of Citigroup, previously said he would try to remove brand names from cards issued by his bank. Visa is the world's biggest credit card brand. Mastercard will let Citibank put its name as the main logo on the front of its cards. *(Bloomberg)*

UK tax harmony plans suffer eurobond blow

From Charles Bremner in Brussels

BRITISH hopes of watering down plans for EU tax harmony suffered a blow yesterday when the European parliament refused to exempt London's lucrative Eurobond market from a draft law to impose a standard levy on savings accounts across the Union.

The Strasbourg assembly voted against amendments that would have spared the Eurobond market, worth up to £2 trillion, from the planned measure, which is aimed at curbing tax evasion by EU citizens who hold savings and investments in other EU states.

The parliament's opinion is non-binding on the EU's lawmaking council of finance ministers, but the solid backing for a standard tax will carry political weight when the law is considered later this year.

The assembly also voted for the proposed rate of taxation to be set at 15 per cent rather than the 20 per cent suggested by the European Commission.

The British Government has said that it will use its veto to block the so-called withholding tax if it is put to a vote without the exemptions. It argues that the market will simply move outside the EU, costing thousands of jobs for the City, which is the world centre for the offshore bonds.

The withholding tax is one of two measures being pressed by the EU's current German presidency as it strives to limit what it sees as loopholes and unfair competition in tax policy among EU states.

To the background of a heavy lobbying campaign by the financial world, the Government hopes that it can convince its partners to drop the Eurobond measure without having to resort to the politically damaging step of the veto.

London wants backing for an optional alternative to a withholding tax, in the form of a commitment by financial institutions to notify the home states of account holders of their investment incomes.

American acts to end dispute

AMERICAN AIRLINES is going to court to end a pilot dispute that has led to the cancellation of 40 per cent of its flights (Oliver August writes from New York).

Many pilots called in sick before the coming US Bank Holiday weekend in an apparently co-ordinated effort. Some 1,000 flights are affected as a result. The pilots had been encouraged by union leaders to call in sick.

The dispute was sparked by American Airlines' purchase of Reno Air, a low-cost carrier. The pilots said they feared for their jobs once Reno Air was integrated into the company.

Virgin in talks with Cadoro

By Martin Waller

THE Virgin Group is in takeover talks with the financially troubled Cadoro, which trades as the Capolito Roma menswear chain. Shares in Cadoro were suspended yesterday at ½p at the company's request.

Richard Branson, the head of the Virgin Group, owns 10 per cent of Cadoro — which sells the Virgin clothing range — through backing a £2.4 million rights issue last August. A spokesman for Virgin said yesterday that an approach had been made to Cadoro.

Cadoro, which was formed through the reverse takeover by Capolito Roma of Owen & Robinson, said in December that it had encountered severe cashflow and trading difficulties. It got into financial problems when it began converting its Foothold sports stores into branches of Capolito Roma. There are now 23 Capolito Roma stores.

Despite last year's rights issue, the company, which is chaired by Egon von Greyerz, the former Dixons director, had to begin attempts to raise more money at the end of last year after it became concerned about its ability to fund working capital. In the six months to August 15, it recorded a pre-tax loss of £1.5 million. It admitted that like-for-like sales were down 17.5 per cent in the first few weeks of the second half..

'No question' of prison for Maxwell

KEVIN MAXWELL, son of the disgraced tycoon Robert Maxwell, was told yesterday that there is "no question" of his being committed to prison for failing to co-operate with Department of Trade and Industry inspectors (Jon Ashworth writes).

Mr Maxwell, 39, risks being held in contempt for refusing to talk to inspectors investigating the 1991 flotation of Mirror Group Newspapers.

At the High Court, where he was appealing for a judicial review, he said he would co-operate if the DTI contributes to his legal costs, which he says he cannot afford.

Though Mr Maxwell's application was rejected, the judge, Sir Richard Scott, reserving judgment, assured him that he would not be sent to prison if a contempt finding was made against him.

BP Amoco to shed 400 in Scotland

By Carl Mortished

BP AMOCO is laying off 400 staff at its Grangemouth petrochemical plant only three months after the oil company revealed plans for a £500 million expansion of the facility with the creation of 2,500 jobs.

The Scottish job cuts are likely to be a prelude to a shakeout at BP Amoco worldwide as the company attempts to protect its margins from the effect of a price collapse in both oil and petrochemicals.

The job cuts, of mostly administrative posts, form part of a review of BP Amoco's staffing levels, which the company blamed on the "most difficult operating environment in recent times". Low oil and chemical prices have forced the company to go far beyond the 6,000 job cuts indicated when BP launched its takeover of Amoco.

BP Amoco said yesterday that it hoped to achieve most of the job reductions by voluntary severance or early retirement but admitted it could not rule out compulsory redundancies. In November the company announced the construction of a pipeline to link the facilities at Grangemouth and Hull that would create 2,500 jobs over three years.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.61	2.44
Austria Sch	20.80	19.14
Belgium Fr	61.24	56.28
Canada $	2.552	2.364
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8789	0.8074
Denmark Kr	11.30	10.41
Egypt	5.75	5.14
Finland Mkk	9.11	8.36
France Fr	9.91	9.13
Germany Dm	2.978	2.736
Greece Dr	490	451
Hong Kong $	13.45	12.25
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	17629	12629
Ireland Pt	1.1878	1.0988
Israel Shk	6.99	6.33
Italy Lira	2961	2724
Japan Yen	201.82	184.29
Malta	0.663	0.604
Netherlds Gld	3.362	3.067
New Zealand $	3.09	2.85
Norway Kr	13.04	12.10
Portugal Esc	301.08	279.05
S Africa Rd	10.58	9.67
Spain Pta	250.94	232.15
Sweden Kr	13.64	12.54
Switzerland Fr	2.452	2.234
Turkey Lira	571445	533462
USA $	1.736	1.593

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Train companies railroad Prescott



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

For a man whose career is about to come to an abrupt end, John O'Brien was in amazingly good spirits yesterday.

Under his tenure as rail franchising director, Britain's railways have slid into such sharp decline that half the services are now less punctual than under British Rail and at twice the cost to the country: the bill, this year, is £1.98 billion.

So why is Mr O'Brien so sanguine after handing out such huge subsidies for such abysmal performance? His answer is that he has been powerless to do anything about it.

Sadly, he's right. Since the railways began their punctuality decline, John Prescott has uttered terrifying public threats about how he will stand for none of their nonsense. But not even the pugilistic Prescott has been able to swipe the grin from the rail companies' faces. As yesterday's bizarre array of penalties and prizes shows, the rail companies are financially untouchable.

Mr Prescott only has himself to blame. In Opposition, he was threatening reprivatisation with such intent that the likes of Stagecoach and National Express would not go near British Rail unless their money were guaranteed immune from political interference.The result is 25 contracts, guaranteed under European law, which promise that Mr Prescott must keep his paws off their bonuses — no matter how much he objects to them. Neither can he do anything about the minimal penalties that can be inflicted if they make a complete botch of running the trains.

Take FirstGroup, the first UK rail company to be threatened with legal action by a city council because its service was so abysmal. It collected an £8,000 punctuality bonus yesterday.But what about Mr Prescott's promise that he will not tolerate poor punctuality, and his threat to claim back the "keys" to franchises?

This, as the train companies know very well when they hear it, is all nonsense. When they gather at his summit on March 25, they will dutifully take some earache, safe in the knowledge that he can do as little as Mr O'Brien. Their money is safe.

For public relations reasons than any real need to pass the buck, the rail operators like to blame Railtrack for their poor performance. Railtrack is far from blameless: it now takes pride in being responsible only for 50 per cent of delays. That, admittedly, is an improvement.

But the real problem with the railways is the financial framework which eschews commercial common sense. The operators are not given incentives to make major improvements in their performance and so they do not. This is the key and it will prove as much of an obstacle to the forthcoming Strategic Rail Authority as it has to Mr O'Brien.

If Mr Prescott wants the Government to have any real power over the railways, he has no option but to rewrite the contracts with the operators, giving them the longer franchises they want in return for much harsher performance targets. Otherwise, his weapons are restricted to surveys, summits and hot air.

Jilted Nat Power needs right partner

It is cruel indeed that, so close to Valentine's Day, National Power should be jilted by United Utilities.

But perhaps the early break-up is just as well, for United was an odd choice of partner for the generator. National Power is keen on expanding its customer base as its generating capacity has contracted. The former mighty electricity producer will soon be a shadow of its former self after the Government ordered a second round of power station sales.

Last November it advanced its ambitions by buying the supply division of Midlands Electricity. Then it said it was looking at other supply businesses but did not want to get saddled with distribution, an understandable point of view. The growth potential in sending electricity buzzing around the wires is severely limited or non-existent, depending on whether you are an optimist, and the prospect of a new regulatory price review hardly adds to its attractions.

But here we are only months later and National Power was on the verge of taking on not only a distribution division but also a water business, something in which it has not a trickle of expertise. It could be that the generator was planning to sell on the bits it did not need, but that may have been a lengthy procedure and good prices would have been far from certain.

It is not the first time that National Power's actions seem at odds with its intentions. Four years ago the generator had shown little interest in buying a regional electricity company until its rival PowerGen went for Midlands Electricity. It then put in a bid for Southern. Both bids were blocked by the DTI's vaguely defined fears over competition in the power industry.

PowerGen fumed but National Power bounced back, deciding it was now no longer interested in a regional business after all. Then, a couple of years ago, it changed its mind again, focusing on trying to strike alliances with power suppliers.

When PowerGen bought East Midlands Electricity last year, National Power made its move on the supply half of Midlands. Last year came reports of a failed merger with another large energy company.

National Power's overseas expansion is yielding slow-growing fruit. But its action at home is causing bemusement. Next time it gets close to the merger altar, it must have the ring ready. It must find a more suitable partner and ensure that it is not jilted. Stomping off, intimating that it was never really that keen on the wedding, is no longer an option if the company intends to convince investors that it has a credible strategy.

FSA gets first past the post

The odds were probably against it, but the actuaries of the pensions industry have come up with a proposal that should hasten the end of the pensions mis-selling debacle. Without some such sensible idea, this scary drama would threaten to rival *The Mousetrap* with its longevity. No wonder that the regulators have leapt at the idea. The FSA will have enough to keep it busy without the pensions problem being a permanent fixture in the pending tray.

Espousing a "ready reckoner" approach to determining who deserves redress and how much they should get will undoubtedly result in the pensions firms paying out to some undeserving cases. But the firms have already accepted that the whole process is biased in favour of the customers rather than the pension providers. The industry now seems to have acknowledged that there is no point in fighting against the presupposition of guilt. Now it would like to bring the sorry episode to a close and get on with selling all the new products that the Government is kindly encouraging on to the market.

That the previous Government was the greatest mis-seller of personal pensions is an argument that the industry has deemed unhelpful to its cause.

Yet, despite the patronising advertising campaign with the ice-cream man, the public is proving remarkably reticent in demanding redress. A simpler set of calculations may offend actuarial sensitivities but should encourage people to fill in the forms and claim their rewards.

Out of a trough

THE misfortunes of PIC International, the pig breeding rump of Dalgety, inspire many a farmyard metaphor: eggs and baskets come to mind. Investments that are at the mercy of the hog cycle are not for those of a chicken disposition. But the directors of PIC are a brave bunch. Pig prices may be dismal now — in the US the slaughter price is less than a third of the cost of getting a piglet to that stage — but PIC is looking to the future. There may be some who worry about its implications but PIC thinks genetic agriculture abounds with exciting prospects for pigs.

BSkyB to offer free Net access

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

BRITISH Sky Broadcasting, the satellite television venture, is to offer free Internet access to all its digital subscribers. BSkyB wants to use the Internet to drive both digital television and interactive services as a way of reaching its target of six million subscribers by 2003.

Yesterday BSkyB announced a marketing alliance with AOL, the Internet access company. Initially, BSkyB will provide content such as the Sky Sports website to AOL. In return, AOL will market SkyDigital to its subscribers.

Mark Booth, BSkyB chief executive, yesterday set a new ambitious target for SkyDigital — one million digital subscribers by October.

BSkyB, in which News International, owner of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake, said it had signed more than 350,000 digital subscribers by the end of January — a better performance than expected. Of these, 34 per cent were new Sky subscribers.

Mr Booth said: "SkyDigital is off to a superb start. It has exceeded our projections and those of the marketplace."

BSkyB shares rose 60½p to 474¾p on the back of the subscriber numbers and a demonstration of Open...., the home shopping and banking service to be launched later this year.

Somerfield, Argos and Dixons said yesterday that they were joining Iceland, GUS, HSBC and Woolworths in the virtual shopping mall.

The investment in the new digital services and higher programming costs meant that in the six months to December 31 there was a 59 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £53.2 million although the interim dividend is being maintained at 2.75p.

For the first time Sky channels were in more than seven million homes in the UK and Ireland with an overall increase of 191,000 subscribers in the three months to December 31.

Carlton to build up ONdigital

By Raymond Snoddy

MICHAEL GREEN, chairman of Carlton Communications, yesterday told shareholders the company planned this year to build on the "promising" start made by ONdigital, the commercial digital terrestrial television service launched in November

Carlton and Granada each own 50 per cent of the digital terrestrial venture.

Mr Green told the annual meeting that Carlton had "made a good start to the year". Television was performing well, with successful formats such as *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* and dramas such as *Peak Practice* helping ITV to a 41 per cent peak-time audience share in January.

Carlton also announced it is launching an Internet service for retailers and publishers of home entertainment. Retailers will be able to link their web sites to a dedicated Carlton site that will handle orders, credit card payments, stock sourcing delivery and fulfilment.

Medeva profits decline

By Paul Durman

MEDEVA, the pharmaceuticals group, yesterday declared it had a "robust" view of its future despite the continuing decline in profits from its best-selling product. Bill Bogie, chief executive, said: "I don't feel vulnerable. The share price has been low for six months, but no one's come for us."

Although Medeva makes substantial profits, its shares, at 100½p, trade at only 6½ times last year's earnings — a fraction of its rivals.

The reason is the fall in profits from methylphenidate, the treatment for hyperactive children. Sales fell 39 per cent to £68 million last year, causing Medeva's profits from its central nervous system drugs to fall by £41 million to £52 million.

Pre-tax profits fell by £51.6 million to £59.3 million. Total sales declined to £321.4 million (£355.4 million). A final dividend of 3.75p a share will lift the total by 5 per cent to 5.75p.

Tempus, page 28

Vaux acts swiftly to find new director

VAUX GROUP, the North East brewer and hotel operator, has moved quickly to fill the post of finance director left vacant by this week's shock dismissal of Neal Gossage along with the chief executive, Martin Grant (Dominic Walsh writes).

Neil Chisman, the respected Stakis finance director, and Mike Thompson of Marston Thompson & Evershed have already been approached to sound out their interest in the post. Both men are looking for new jobs after takeover bids for their respective companies.

Mr Chisman, who has been with Stakis for ten years, is to leave the company after completion of a takeover by Ladbroke. Mr Thompson was left without a job after Marston's lost a bid battle with Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries.

A surprise candidate for the job is Tim Walker, a former Vaux finance director. Vaux has already appointed Peter Catesby, head of Vaux's Swallow Hotels arm, as the new group chief executive.



Investors hold nerve despite growing gloom

PETER TRIEVNOR



Mark Booth, chief executive of BSkyB, who saw shares of the satellite broadcaster rise 60½p to 474¾p on digital sales news

SHARE prices closed modestly lower in London yesterday, although the outcome could have been a lot worse following the 150-point fall overnight in New York.

In the event, London put together a resilient performance shrugging off the gloomy quarterly *Inflation Report* from the Bank of England. At one stage, the FTSE 100 index was nursing a fall of more than 80 points, but rallied during the final hours with the help of an opening rise on Wall Street to reduce the fall to 9.7 at 5,770.2.

It was the sixth-consecutive day of losses for the market. The FTSE 250 index was also 19.9 down at 5,157.6 as the total number of shares traded reached 958 million.

Part of the resilience could be traced back to a strong performance by the Anglo-Dutch food group **Unilever**, up 36½p 582½p. The price touched a low of 460p in October, and has been looking oversold ever since. Dealers say the differential between the ordinary shares and the NV is now 16 per cent and they have been urging clients to switch into the cheaper stock.

A strong performance from **BSkyB**, up 60½p to 474¾p, also kept the market on an even keel. The satellite broadcaster, 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*, was helped by the high level of subscribers for its digital satellite service. This left rival **Carlton Communications** looking disgruntled with its shares losing 38p to 596p.

British Telecom wobbled ahead of results later today that are expected to show a downturn in profitability. The price touched 882p before ending all square at 908p.

News of the breakdown in merger talks between **National Power**, up 11½p to 511½p, and **United Utilities**, 9p better at 812p, succeeded in focusing attention back on the utilities sector. National Power may not want to revive talks with United, but it has confirmed it is still on the lookout for other suitable candidates. **Hyder**, up 10p to 818½p, and **Scottish and Southern Energy**, 3p firmer at 618p, are both seen as targets because of their regional electricity interests.

National Power already owns Midland Electricity, while United was formed by the merger of Norweb and North West Water. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, remains a big bull of NP.

Revived takeover talk hoisted **Safeway** 8½p to 298½p in heavy turnover that saw almost 13 million shares traded. Once again, the food retailer, which earlier this week came out with some impressive like-for-like sales growth, is being linked with the stores group K-Mart.

First Leisure continued to make headway with a rise of 6½p to 226½p on turnover of 1.73 million shares. There is still talk of a bid from **Bass**, down 11½p at 807p, after a downgrading from BT Alex Brown, the broker. It has lowered its earnings forecasts for the next three years by between 1 per cent and 3 per cent after the annual meeting.

Big volume was recorded in **Tomkins** with 22 million shares traded as the price held steady at 237¼p. But takeover hopes have begun to fade at **FKI** with the price easing 8¼p to 166p. **David S Smith** was 1p firmer at 125p, still looking for a possible bid approach. The speculators say an offer worth 160p a share lies just round the corner.

Select Appointments stood out with a jump of 31½p to 616½p. Merrill Lynch, the broker, has initiated coverage of the recruitment specialist with a "buy" recommendation and has set a target price of 940p. It says the company enjoys strong earnings momentum and looks undervalued in both absolute and relative terms.

The sell-off of Internet-related stocks overnight in the US also took its toll of **Dixons**, 41½p lower at 982½p. **Reuters**, which unveiled lower profits on Tuesday, also finished 40p down at 793½p.

Reunion Mining continued to make headway adding 12½p at 88p. Gossips say the bidder is Anglo American, which is anxious to get its hands on the group's Skorpion zinc mine.

Speculative buying hoisted **Monument Oil & Gas** 4¼p to 41½p. Dealers say Monument might become target for **Enterprise Oil**, 11¼p better at 249¾p, if its proposed merger with **Lasmo**, down 6p at 110p, falls through.

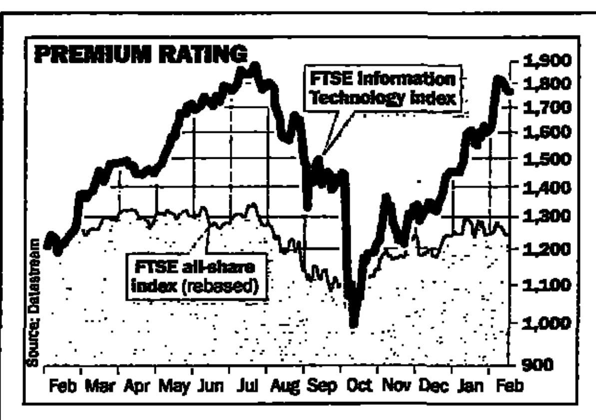
Old English Pub Co retreated another 2½p to 137½p. It has now fallen from the 261p level at which it issued a profits warning at the start of this month. The company looks vulnerable to a bid.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Longer-dated issues buckled after a positive start, weighed down by the heavy load of new issues the market was forced to absorb. This included £1.65 billion of London & Continental Railways and the reissue of two euro/sterling bond issues totalling £650 million.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt fell 17p to £118.53 as 35,000 contracts were completed. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 fell 17p to £150.48, while, at the shorter end, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was 7p better at £107.57.

☐ **NEW YORK:** US shares see-sawed in early trading. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 5.15 points lower at 9,127.88.

☐ Because of problems at our supplier, issues prices quoted are Tuesday's.



AMERICAN investors appear finally to have woken up to the fact that Internet companies do not make money. The ratings seem difficult to justify, based on assumptions of what might be earned five or ten years down the line.

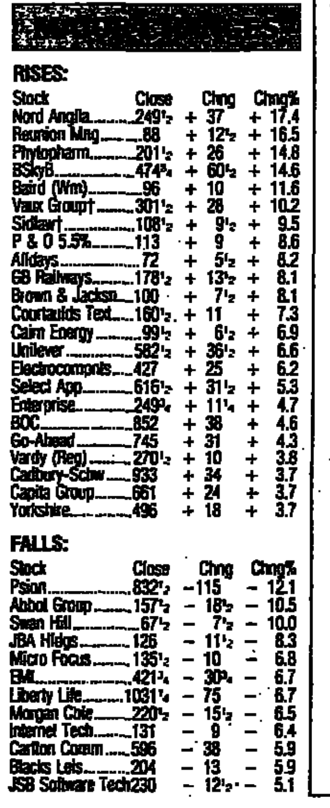
Is the bubble about to burst, as this week's agreed bid by USA Network for Lycos appears to suggest? The terms of the deal left Lycos nursing a hefty fall. The sky-high ratings enjoyed by companies with just the vaguest connection to the Internet may soon be a thing of the past.

However, some investors still seem keen to jump on the bandwagon. The start of trading on Easdaq for NetVision saw the shares open at €12 before climbing to €45.37. The issue had been more than 75 times oversubscribed.

But yesterday there was no support for such stocks in London where Internet Technology fell 9p to 131p, Geo Interactive 5p to 44p, Easynet Group 11½p to 213½p, and On-Line 5p to 98½p.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	9127.88 (−5.15)
S&P Composite	1217.47 (+1.33)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	13952.40 (+49.74)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	9076.33 (−168.16)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	512.49 (5.57)
Sydney:	
AO	2854.8 (−35.9)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	4796.82 (−107.53)
Singapore:	
Straits	1286.56 (−19.81)
Brussels:	
BEL20	3338.73 (−56.46)
Paris:	
CAC-40	4001.93 (−36.56)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	1336.30 (−8.20)
London:	
FT 30	3540.1 (−1.0)
FTSE 100	5770.2 (−9.7)
FTSE 250	5557.6 (−19.9)
FTSE 350	2753.5 (−5.6)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2663.70 (−20.82)
FTSE All-Share	2665.16 (−5.54)
FTSE Non Financials	2753.30 (−6.60)
FTSE Fixed Interest	158.89 (+0.74)
FTSE Govt Secs	115.74 (+0.18)
Bargains	70660
SEAQ Volume	958.0m
US$	1.6288 (−0.0077)
Euro	0.6950 (+0.0046)
£:SDR	1.1798
Exchange Index	100.0 (−0.6)
Bank on England official close (4pm)	
RPI	164.4 Dec (2.8%) Jan 1987 = 100
RPIX	162.4 Dec (2.6%) Jan 1987 = 100



AIM VCT	100	...	
Abbey Natl Dublin Inv	88	...	
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Cap	98	...	
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Inc	120	...	
Close Bros Dev VCT	100	...	
Gander Properties	7	...	
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	105¾	...	
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	98¾	−	¼
Singer & Frd AIM VCT	100	...	
Yeoman II Equity Units	103	...	
Yeoman II Inv Tst Cap	5¼	...	
Yeoman II Inv Tst Inc	97½	...	
Yeoman II Zero Div Pf	116¼	...	

Ambient Media n/p (49)	¾	...

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Nord Anglia	249½	+ 37	+ 17.4
Reunion Mng	88	+ 12½	+ 16.5
Phytopharm	201½	+ 26	+ 14.8
BSkyB	474¾	+ 60½	+ 14.6
Baird (Wm)	96	+ 10	+ 11.6
Vaux Group†	301½	+ 28	+ 10.2
Sidlaw†	108½	+ 9½	+ 9.5
P & O 5.5%	113	+ 9	+ 8.6
Alldays	72	+ 5½	+ 8.2
GB Railways	178½	+ 13½	+ 8.1
Brown & Jacksn	100	+ 7½	+ 8.1
Courtaulds Text	160½	+ 11	+ 7.3
Cairn Energy	99½	+ 6½	+ 6.9
Unilever	582½	+ 36½	+ 6.6
Electrocompnts	427	+ 25	+ 6.2
Select App	616½	+ 31½	+ 5.3
Enterprise	249¾	+ 11¼	+ 4.7
BOC	852	+ 38	+ 4.6
Go-Ahead	745	+ 31	+ 4.3
Vardy (Reg)	270½	+ 10	+ 3.8
Cadbury-Schw	933	+ 34	+ 3.7
Capita Group	661	+ 24	+ 3.7
Yorkshire	496	+ 18	+ 3.7

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Psion	832½	−115	− 12.1
Abbot Group	157½	− 18½	− 10.5
Swan Hill	67½	− 7½	− 10.0
JBA Hldgs	126	− 11½	− 8.3
Micro Focus	135½	− 10	− 6.8
EMI	421¾	− 30¾	− 6.7
Liberty Life	1031¼	− 75	− 6.7
Morgan Crucible	220½	− 15½	− 6.5
Internet Tech	131	− 9	− 6.4
Carlton Comm	596	− 38	− 5.9
Blacks Leis	204	− 13	− 5.9
JSB Software Tech	230	− 12½	− 5.1

Under the weather

MEDEVA is a case study in the difficulties medium-sized drug companies face in making the transition to the premier league — or even the first division. A lucky break with methylphenidate, its treatment for hyperactivity in children, briefly turned Medeva into a company with a market value of £1 billion and annual profits that peaked at £110 million.

Unfortunately Medeva was too slow in finding follow-up products to take up the slack as methylphenidate felt the inevitable heat of competition. Collapsing sales and profits from its biggest-selling drug left the company with a grim-looking earnings profile going forward and since investors demand growth from their pharmaceutical stocks, it is hardly surprising that Medeva's shares have slid from 330p to 100p over the past two years.

The company has had its bad luck. A diet drug that looked promising had the rug pulled from under it by a health scare in the US. But most of the products it licenses look too small to solve its problems.

Medeva's Bill Bogie says this troubled phase was simply a consequence of the company's awkward adolescence. The pipeline is now stronger, although heavily dependent on the Hepagene preparation for hepatitis B. Dr Bogie also argues that the company's established regulatory, manufacturing and marketing experience leave it well-placed to benefit from the increasing fragmentation of the pharmaceutical development industry.

The shares are cheap, but profits look set to slip again this year, and Hepagene faces some tough competition from SmithKline Beecham. In the near term, a takeover looks the best hope for investors.

Psion

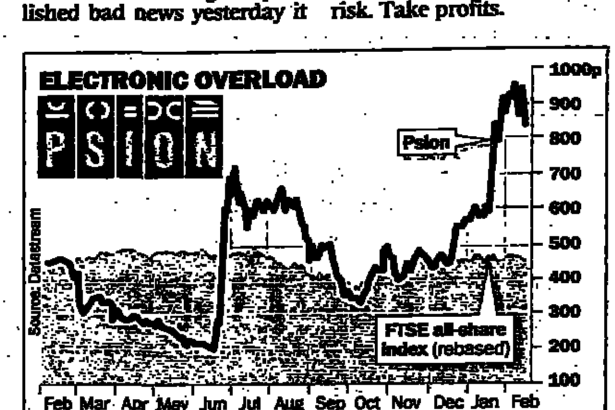
IN NORMAL circumstances, a profit warning of the sort issued by Psion would have been enough to destroy the share price. Instead, the bad news was accompanied by only a slight deflation in the size of the enormous hot-air balloon that is this company's share price.

Few care about Psion's data communications division, the cause of the profit warning. The support for Psion comes courtesy of its Symbian joint venture with Eriksson, Nokia and Motorola. Symbian is liked because it is developing software that has a chance of becoming the world standard for the next generation of mobile phones.

But yesterday's profit warning served as a useful reminder of how delicate exciting new technologies can be. Psion has discovered that the market for the once-promising PC modem cards has fallen into obsolescence almost overnight. Fortunately, this does not spell the end, but Psion profits for 1999 could slip as low as £8 million — it is thought to have made £12 million in 1998.

While Symbian played no role in exacerbating the published bad news yesterday it does face ferocious competition from Sun Microsystems, Microsoft and, after a deal with Smartcode Technologie yesterday, 3Com. In fact, the enhanced competition brought with 3Com may have had more to do with the Psion price fall than the substance of the profit warning.

The shares carry sizeable risk. Take profits.



Field

THE BID competition for Field Group is bringing an unexpected but pleasant denouement to what looks like the final chapter of this packaging company's history.

An American packaging company called Chesapeake opened the bidding for Field with 320p a share tilt last month. Yesterday Shorewood Packaging Corporation, a US paper company, confirmed intentions expressed two weeks ago by offering 350p.

In chasing the shares up 12½p to 356p yesterday the market clearly believes that Chesapeake will come back for more. That leaves Field shareholders in the luxurious position of having to do nothing except enjoy the rivals' courtship. But those not already on the Field share register have probably missed the opportunity to make significant sums.

Better for them to look for repeat opportunities elsewhere in the sector. David S Smith — where shares have climbed 43 per cent in the last month — is one candidate.

If Shorewood wins with this bid Field shareholders will have seen the value of their shares rise by nearly 150 per cent, so perhaps there is something more to be earned on David S Smith shares.

At 350p the Shorewood offer for Field represents the equivalent of about 14 times estimates of current-year earnings per share. But at 125p David Smith shares are already trade on a pe of 16 plus.

Punt on a bid for Smith if you like, but do not expect the returns seen with Field.

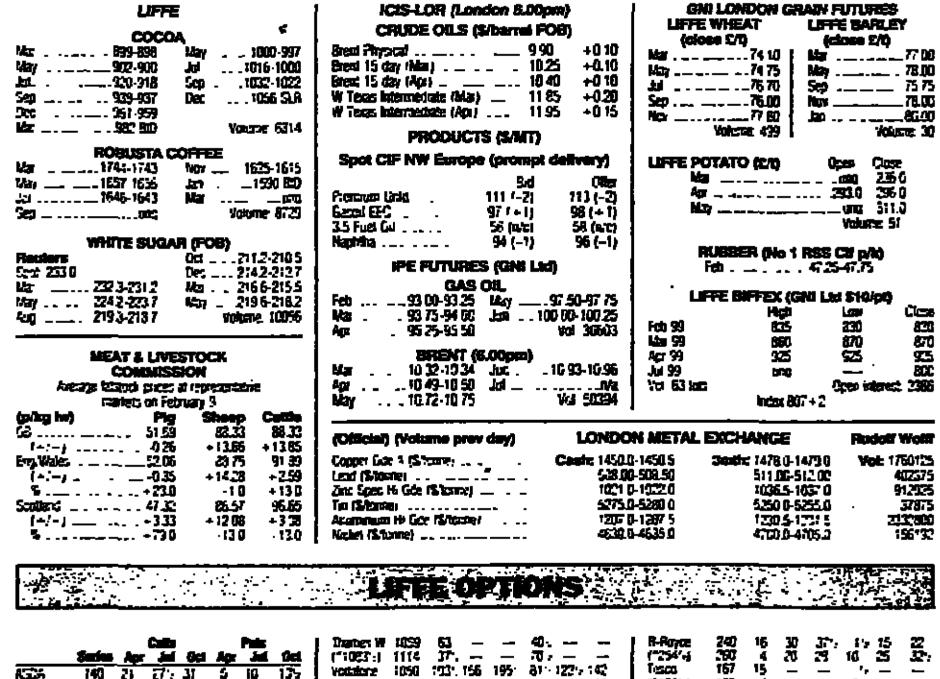
PIC Intl

IN PASSING the dividend, PIC International said it all. Such is the depth of the depression among pork producers, and such is the doubt surrounding the industry's near future, this company could not possibly reward shareholders with any income. It was the exceptionally unlucky confluence of several factors that led PIC into these dire straits. But one-off negative factors also worsened — at exactly the wrong time — to exaggerate the impact of the permanently troublesome hog cycle.

The hog cycle (where production oversupply leads to crashing prices, which leads to capacity reduction, which leads to price increases, which leads to capacity growth again . . .) seems to be a fixture. This is despite the fact that most pigmeat industry participants appreciate the damage it causes.

PIC International may not encounter the desperate pork industry conditions that have so marred its first months as an independent company. But without successful diversification PIC remains vulnerable to the hog cycle. Avoid.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	899-898	May	1000-997
May	902-900	Jul	1016-1000
Jul	920-918	Sep	1032-1022
Sep	939-937	Dec	1056 SLR
Dec	961-959		
Mar	982 BID		Volume: 6314

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Mar	1744-1743	Nov	1625-1615
May	1657-1656	Jan	1590 BID
Jul	1646-1643	Mar	unq
Sep	unq		Volume: 8720

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Oct	211.2-210.5
Spot: 233.0		Dec	214.2-212.7
Mar	232.3-231.2	Mar	216.6-215.5
May	224.2-223.7	May	219.6-218.2
Aug	219.3-213.7		Volume: 10056

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION
Average fatstock prices at representative markets on February 9

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	51.69	88.33	88.32
(+/−)	−0.26	+13.66	+13.85
Eng/Wales	52.06	89.75	91.39
(+/−)	−0.35	+14.28	+2.59
%	+23.0	−1.0	+13.0
Scotland	47.32	86.57	96.65
(+/−)	−3.33	+12.08	+3.38
%	−73.0	−13.0	−13.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	9.90	+0.10
Brent 15 day (Mar)	10.25	+0.10
Brent 15 day (Apr)	10.40	+0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	11.85	+0.20
W Texas Intermediate (Apr)	11.95	+0.15

PRODUCTS ($/MT)
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	111 (−2)	113 (−2)
Gasoil EEC	97 (+1)	98 (+1)
3.5 Fuel Oil	56 (n/c)	58 (n/c)
Naphtha	94 (−1)	96 (−1)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Feb	93.00-93.25	May	97.50-97.75
Mar	93.75-94.00	Jun	100.00-100.25
Apr	95.25-95.50		Vol: 30603

BRENT (6.00pm)

Mar	10.32-10.34	Jun	10.93-10.96
Apr	10.49-10.50	Jul	n/a
May	10.72-10.75		Vol: 50394

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	74.10	Mar	77.00
May	74.75	May	78.00
Jul	76.70	Sep	75.75
Sep	76.00	Nov	78.00
Nov	77.80	Jan	80.00
	Volume: 439		Volume: 30

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	235.0
Apr	293.0	296.0
May	unq	311.0
		Volume: 51

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)
Feb 47.25-47.75

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Feb 99	835	830	830
Mar 99	880	870	870
Apr 99	925	925	925
Jul 99	unq	—	800
Vol: 63 lots			Open interest: 2386

Index 807 + 2

(Official) (Volume prev day)	LONDON METAL EXCHANGE Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1450.0-1450.5	1478.0-1479.0	1760125
Lead ($/tonne)	508.00-508.50	511.00-512.00	402575
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1021.0-1022.0	1036.5-1037.0	912025
Tin ($/tonne)	5275.0-5280.0	5250.0-5255.0	37875
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1207.0-1287.5	1230.5-1231.5	2132800
Nickel ($/tonne)	4630.0-4635.0	4700.0-4705.0	156132

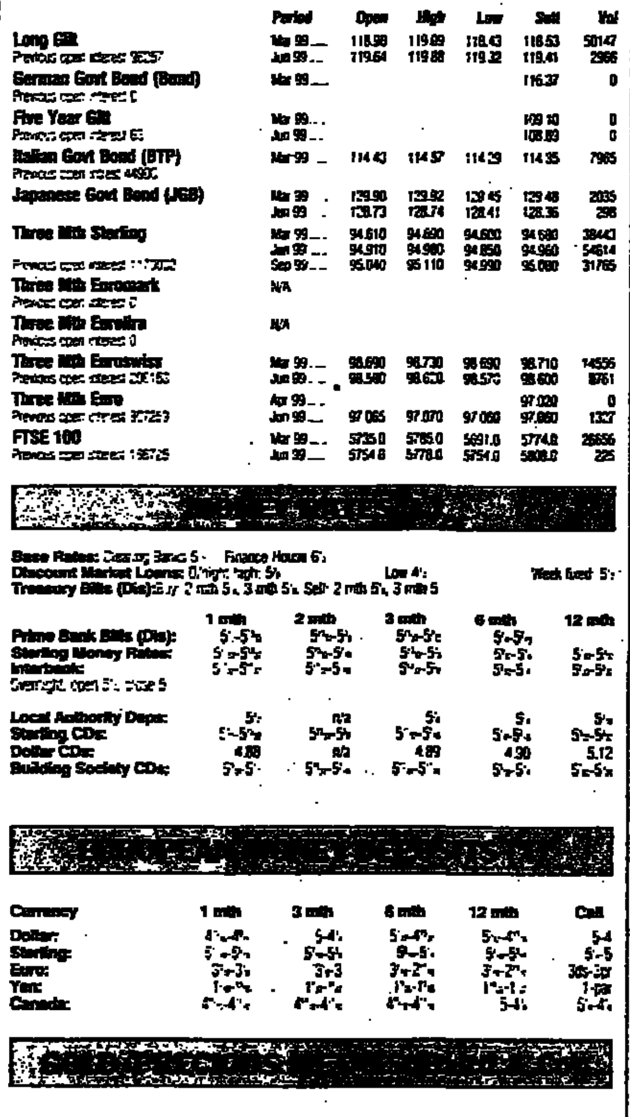
LIFFE OPTIONS

Series		Calls Apr	Jul	Oct	Puts Apr	Jul	Oct
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Thames W	1059	63	—	—	40½	—	—
("1083")	1114	37½	—	—	70½	—	—
R-Royce	240	16	30	37½	1½	15	22
("254½")	260	4	20	29	10	25	32½
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

FTSE INDEX ("5776")

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

February 10 Total: 3323 Calls: 1337 Puts: 2022 *Underlying security price



LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 99	118.98	119.09	118.43	118.53	50147
Previous open interest: 96257	Jun 99	119.64	119.88	119.32	119.41	2966
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 99				116.37	0
Previous open interest: 0						
Five Year Gilt	Mar 99				109.10	0
Previous open interest: 63	Jun 99				108.89	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 99	114.43	114.57	114.29	114.35	7965
Previous open interest: 4490C						
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 99	129.90	129.92	129.45	129.48	2035
	Jun 99	128.73	128.74	128.41	128.36	298
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.610	94.690	94.600	94.680	38443
	Jun 99	94.910	94.980	94.850	94.960	54614
Previous open interest: 117002	Sep 99	95.040	95.110	94.990	95.090	31765
Three Mth Euromark	N/A					
Previous open interest: 0						
Three Mth Eurolira	N/A					
Previous open interest: 0						
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.690	98.730	98.690	98.710	14556
Previous open interest: 206153	Jun 99	98.580	98.620	98.570	98.600	8761
Three Mth Euro	Apr 99				97.020	0
Previous open interest: 37253	Jun 99	97.065	97.070	97.060	97.060	1327
FTSE 100	Mar 99	5735.0	5785.0	5691.0	5774.0	26656
Previous open interest: 136725	Jun 99	5754.8	5778.0	5754.0	5808.0	225

MONEY MARKET RATES

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5½ Finance House 6½
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 5¾ Low 4½ Week fixed: 5½
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5¼, 3 mth 5¼. Sell: 2 mth 5⅛, 3 mth 5

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5⅜	5⅜-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛	
Sterling Money Rates:	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5¼	5⅜-5⅜	5⅛-5⅛	5½-5⅛
Interbank:	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5⅛	5⅜-5⅜	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛
Overnight: open 5½ close 5					
Local Authority Deps:	5½	n/a	5¼	5⅛	5⅛
Sterling CDs:	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5⅜	5¼-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛
Dollar CDs:	4.88	n/a	4.89	4.90	5.12
Building Society CDs:	5⅜-5½	5⅜-5¼	5⅜-5¼	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛

CURRENCY

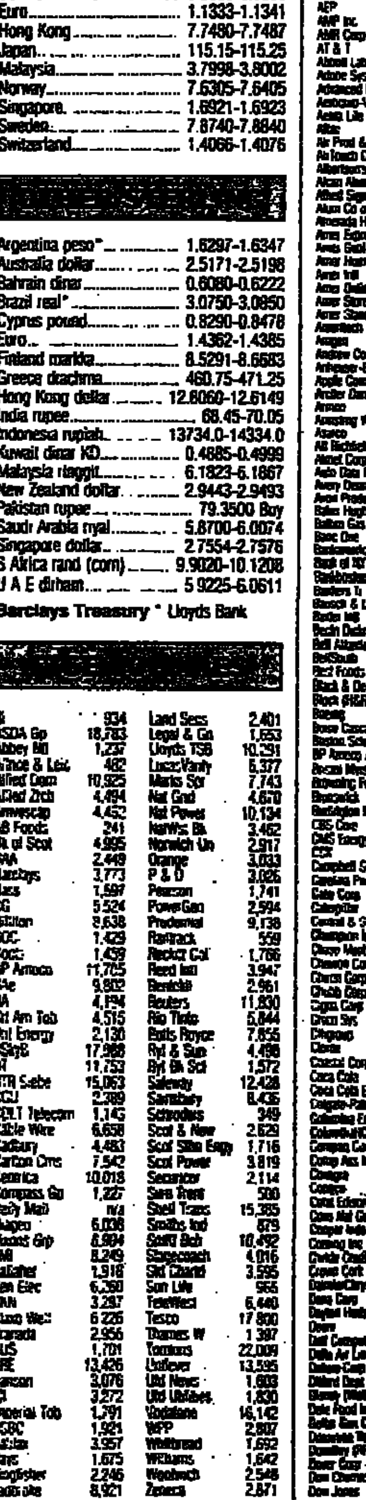
Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Canada:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Bullion: Open: $287.20-287.70 Close: $287.50-288.00 High: $287.90-288.40 Low: $287.20-287.70 AM: $287.10 PM: $288.20
Krugerrand: $286.50-290.25 (£176.50-178.50)
Platinum: $360.00 (£221.00) **Silver:** $5.525 (£3.385) **Palladium:** $359.00 (£220.50)

Mid Rates for February 10	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Copenhagen	10.6574-10.7145	10.696-10.710	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro	1.4373-1.4398	1.4381-1.4395	0.12-0.14ds	0.37-0.41ds
Montreal	2.4276-2.4439	2.4307-2.4337	0.15-0.08pr	0.32-0.18pr
New York	1.6260-1.6338	1.6285-1.6294	0.90-0.70pr	0.195-0.165pr
Oslo	12.428-12.488	12.438-12.456	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	12.720-12.838	12.828-12.851	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	185.41-188.19	186.41-186.68	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.2898-2.3102	2.2957-2.2986	[illegible]	[illegible]

Premium = pr Discount = ds

Source: Extel



EXCHANGE RATES

Australia	1.5460-1.5472
Canada	1.4914-1.4924
Denmark	6.5588-6.5608
Euro	1.1333-1.1341
Hong Kong	7.7480-7.7487
Japan	115.15-115.25
Malaysia	3.7998-3.8002
Norway	7.6305-7.6405
Singapore	1.6921-1.6923
Sweden	7.8740-7.8840
Switzerland	1.4066-1.4076

Argentina peso*	1.6297-1.6347
Australia dollar	2.5171-2.5198
Bahrain dinar	0.6080-0.6222
Brazil real*	3.0750-3.0850
Cyprus pound	0.8290-0.8478
Euro	1.4362-1.4385
Finland markka	8.5291-8.6583
Greece drachma	460.75-471.25
Hong Kong dollar	12.6060-12.6149
India rupee	68.45-70.05
Indonesia rupiah	13734.0-14334.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4885-0.4999
Malaysia ringgit	6.1823-6.1867
New Zealand dollar	2.9443-2.9493
Pakistan rupee	79.3500 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8700-6.0074
Singapore dollar	2.7554-2.7576
S Africa rand (com)	9.9020-10.1208
U A E dirham	5.9225-6.0611

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

3i	934	Land Secs	2,401
ASDA Gp	18,783	Legal & Gn	1,653

NEW YORK

	Feb 10 midday	Feb 9 close		Feb 10 midday	Feb 9 close		Feb 10 midday	Feb 9 close
AEP	[illegible]	[illegible]	Duke Energy	[illegible]	[illegible]	Occidental Pet	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMP Inc	[illegible]	[illegible]	Du Pont	[illegible]	[illegible]	Office Depot	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMR Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]	Eastman Chem	[illegible]	[illegible]	Oracle	[illegible]	[illegible]
AT & T	[illegible]	[illegible]	Eastman Kodak	[illegible]	[illegible]	Oryx Energy Co	[illegible]	[illegible]
Abbott Labs	[illegible]	[illegible]	Eaton Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]	Owens Corning	[illegible]	[illegible]



Our champions become Big Brother

One of the last bastions of resale price maintenance is under fire. After long agitation, the Director-General of Fair Trading has asked the Restrictive Practices Court to stop manufacturers fixing minimum prices at which retailers may sell all those non-prescription medicines most of us reach for when we suffer from headaches, colds or things too embarrassing to mention.

From the late 1950s onward, the Institute of Economic Affairs and others campaigned for free price competition in retailing to bring prices of branded goods down, boost sales and raise living standards. This classic campaign for free market forces brought together aggressive entrepreneurs and traditional economists. They fought a long battle against entrenched forces big and small who wanted a quiet, stable life.

The forces of order had a genuine if emotional case based on keeping local shops, ensuring responsible trading and good service. But fixing retail prices was mainly an instrument of manufacturers' power. The lure of price cuts won and resale price maintenance was outlawed 35 years ago. Only a shrinking group of exceptions was permitted by the Court.

The latest to go was books. In the end, publishers gave up without a struggle. Books were exempted to help literary small bookshops to survive but mainly to use high-priced best sellers to subsidise others that had little hope of selling well, let alone making a profit. That gradually changed, as books fought back against television, reading became a growth sector of the leisure industry and prizes made literary novels more viable. Most of all, Waterstones and other specialist chains prospered by stocking lots of titles, to serve this new market. The old trade restrictions were not needed.

Over-the-counter medicines raise like issues. Consumers need reliable, skilled local prescription pharmacists, who need decent profits on other lines to survive. But Boots the Chemist is nearly everywhere these days and local chemists are doing better by serving the expanding markets for all sorts of health goods.

Defenders still claim that a quarter of chemists shops will close if prices were freed. Aggressors such as Asda claim that consumers are paying £300 million a year more than they need, much of it on items such as vitamins.

In those terms, it is virtually an open-and-shut case. But that is not the whole story. The balance of power has been transformed. Even the most powerful manufacturers of branded groceries are now on the back foot in Britain. But their power to manipulate prices and boost margins has not been dissipated. It has been seized by im-


GRAHAM SEARJEANT

mensely powerful retailers, especially the big four grocers: Tesco, Sainsbury, Safeway and Asda.

Generations of consumers who grew up after the Resale Prices Act have much to thank the superstores for. First came lower prices, then greater choice. So we do now. Own-label goods, pioneered by Sainsbury and others from Marks & Spencer's example in clothing, allowed people to buy goods of comparable quality to leading brands at much lower prices. They introduced novelties such as muesli and wines from new provinces to ordinary families.

Success has, however, built the combined market shares of the big four to what competition authorities call a "complex monopoly" and economists call oligopoly. They share at least two thirds of the grocery market, depending on how you define it. And as markets have neared saturation, competitive instincts have turned to abuse of monopoly power.

Own brands are now routinely positioned as full-margin brand leaders. When a manufacturer launches a successful new brand, you may rely on the own brand equivalent to arrive at a similar price a few months later, accompanied by a rise in the shelf price of the demoted manufacturer's brand. What what once a stimulus to innovation is now a deterrent.

Passing off own brand goods as well-known brands has become a way of life. One or two manufacturers have been brave enough to mount successful court cases but the practice, which amounts to theft of intellectual property, continues largely unchecked. Only the biggest international food manufacturers such as Nestlé can afford, for instance, to patent their own new shapes of bottle.

Once they captured the "excess" profits of manufacturers, or farmers, some superstores began to behave in the textbook fashion of oligopolists. Most have gradually learnt not to compete seriously with each other on price, in spite of their constant claims to the contrary. The last "price war" was aimed at keeping out new entrants. Occasionally, however, little skirmishes that amount to little more than game-playing play havoc with small shops. Not long ago, baked beans were priced down to 5p a tin, below cost, as each vied to be most consumer friendly. Lately, some have sold bread at 7p or 9p a loaf, less than half normal price.

Such loss leaders may be within the honoured traditional practices of supermarkets, which still like to think of themselves as the cheeky chappie on the market stall. The effect, however, is that of predatory pricing: to drive out competition in order to jack up prices later on. If there are victims, they will be Britain's remaining small shops, which cannot afford a monopolist's cross subsidies.

The Director-General of Fair Trading should look at these practices before he focuses on medicine prices. Otherwise he can guarantee that his victory in the court will lead to exactly the sort of irresponsible trading the die-hards predict. Selling panaceas as 5p loss leaders is not healthy competition.

Investors count the cost of lasting lure of the Orient

Risks mount for foreign banks as casualties continue in China, writes Alasdair Murray

For investors gathered in London last week to China's answer to Howard Davies the message was simple: despite all the turmoil in Asia and the collapse of one of the country's most prominent investment companies, it is business as usual.

Zhou Zhengqing, chairman of the Securities Regulatory Commission, reassured his audience of City financiers and businessmen that China remains committed to stable exchange rates and will continue to use expansionary policies to maintain a healthy economic growth rate. Foreign investors should also be tempted back into the Chinese equity markets by the country's promised radical overhaul of its securities laws which will clarify ownership structures and improve financial reporting laws.

Although no one would expect a senior Chinese official to say otherwise, Mr Zhengqing's morale-boosting comments, superficially at least, contain more than a element of truth. China managed to trot out respectable growth figures last year, with GDP rising at 7.8 per cent compared with a Government target of 8 per cent. The Chinese Government has promised to raise fixed investment by 12 per cent this year to keep GDP growth bubbling along at around 7 per cent. China's Central Bank is sitting on massive currency reserves of $145 billion (£88 billion) with which to fight a financial crisis. Despite the well-documented problems across Asia, the country recorded a hefty current account surplus of $30 billion last year, with foreign direct investment modestly increasing to $45 billion.

Leading American companies are still sufficiently lured by the Orient to vote China joint second in a list of favoured investment sites in a recent survey.


Devaluation of the yuan coupled with a fundamental overhaul of the economy may be the only solution to China's problems

It is hard, however, to reconcile this bullish picture with the market pandemonium prompted by just one passing reference in the Chinese press to devaluation at the end of last month. That the brief allusion to the dreaded D word — in an article scripted by a young journalist and tucked away in China's sole English language national — should so shake the market, speaks volumes for the depth of nervousness over China's economic prospects.

Only an emergency distancing operation conducted by Dai Xianglong, the governor of the Chinese Central Bank, succeeded in — temporarily at least — calming the markets.

Analysts have long been aware that there is a credibility gap between the official data and the reality of an economy suffering massive overcapacity and a government struggling to impose badly needed structural reform without causing social discontent. However, it has taken the very real collapse of the Guandong International Trust and Investment Company (GITIC) finally to bring this message home to investors.

GITIC was forced into bankruptcy last month with debts conservatively estimated to total $4.4 billion. At its peak, the company seemed to embody all the potential riches of this booming province of Southern China. Its collapse has highlighted everything currently wrong with Chinese capitalism: uncontrolled over-investment in the property sector; a structure so opaque that the liquidator still has not discovered the full extent of its liabilities; a business strategy driven by politics, not economics, and more than just a whiff of corruption.

For the first time in recent years, foreign banks have been burned in China. Government nods and winks that investing in the myriad of International Trusts and Investment companies (ITICS) would prove as secure as sovereign lending have not been honoured. Instead, the Chinese Government has washed its hands of GITIC.

International banks are understandably angered by the Chinese Government's attitude, but they must share some of the blame. Normal risk analysis appears to have been thrown out of the window, with the banks not only seduced by promised profits but desperate to win favour with the authorities to guarantee future expansion.

Nor is GITIC likely to prove the last casualty. Another Guandong company, Guandong Enterprises, is teetering on the brink with debts of nearly $3 billion. An ITIC in the Manchurian city of Dalian also recently defaulted on a $20 million certificate of deposit jointly owed to a number of European banks. Japanese banks have claimed that the company's predicament is effectively in default of loans worth $2 billion. Chinese authorities reject these claims.

There is no doubt, however, that more of China's 240 ITICS are likely to go under, leaving foreign banks counting the cost. The Chinese Central Bank estimates ITICS are holding foreign debts of $8.1 billion. Independent observers claim the real figure is twice as much.

The GITIC collapse has finally stung the Chinese Government into action, as much as to reduce its own exposure to the ITICS as to appease private investors. While wholescale overhaul has been promised, to date only five smaller ITICS have been earmarked for closure and 13 others for restructuring. The action appears to be too little too late to prevent the fallout being felt elsewhere in China's economy. The two main stock markets, in Shanghai and Shenzen, have fallen to all-time lows while foreign bank lending premiums are beginning to increase.

Equally worrying, for a Government obsessed with preserving social order, there is growing evidence of the human cost of China's economic problems. In Shenzen, a group of 150 investors have taken the unusual step of asking for a licence to protest against a brokerage firm that they claim has defrauded them of $56 million. Elsewhere in the country there has been a spate of bombs that have killed more than 31 people and injured 100 during the last month.

The Chinese Government is faced with an economy in desperate need of a radical restructuring programme that will inevitably lead to even larger social costs. External analysts estimate the real unemployment rate stands at 15 per cent, with some 170 million rural workers "surplus" to requirements. Reforming the nationalised state sector is likely to increase the number of jobless by 30 million and this figure does not take into account the fact that Chinese companies have run up inventories worth $500 billion, or half the total economy, in a desperate attempt to meet output targets. As a result, prices have fallen for 15 months in a row and it is difficult to see how domestic demand can be sufficiently stimulated to absorb this kind of slack.

The banking sector is also in serious trouble, with bad loans conservatively estimated to total $200 billion or 20 per cent of GDP. The Government has promised to package off the bad loans to newly created independent agencies, a plan which Deutsche Bank believes will cost some $430 billion.

China's Government is claiming it will achieve 7 per cent growth this year. Analysts, however, forecast that the country will be lucky to record a growth rate of 4 per cent.

This is why the issue of devaluation is never likely to be far away. For all the well-rehearsed anti-devaluation arguments — the increased costs of servicing foreign debt; the risk of renewed currency contagion across Asia and, not least, the recent appreciation in the yen — devaluation will remain a tempting quick-fix policy lever. With interest rates down to low levels and China already subsidising exporters through a tax rebate, the only alternative is the lengthy and potentially socially disruptive task of a fundamental overhaul of the domestic economy.

A close reading of recent Chinese pronouncements on the subject shows that the Government, not surprisingly, has kept its options open. Lu Mai, chief executive of China Development Research Foundation, a think tank with close government links, late last month ruled out a devaluation now but suggested that the yuan should move in a wider currency band once the other Asian economies have settled down. The Governor of the Chinese Central Bank has been careful only to rule out devaluation while China is still running a huge trade surplus.

For all China's desire to avoid the fate that befell the rest of Asia, in the end it appears not a question of if, but when, the country devalues.

Boards pass over the IT conundrums

Flick through the annual report of any large American high-tech company and you are likely to see a profile of its "chief technology officer" or "chief information officer".

These creatures are usually former senior technicians who have at some point in their career decided to change out of their white coat and into a pinstripe suit. In the US, being chief technology officer (or "cto") is only slightly less impressive than being chief executive or finance director.

In Britain, however, such executives are still a rather rare breed. Only companies that specialise in technology — such as Psion, the palmtop computer manufacturer, and a clutch of tiny Cambridge-based start-up ventures — are likely to employ technical experts at board level. Even then, it is usually only to please American investors.

But with technology becoming more important — and more complex — by the day, the lack of chief technology officers on the boards of British companies could become a problem. Indeed, it could lead to some of the major strategic advantages of technology being overlooked.

Research by the Gartner Group, published this week, seems to support this theory. The research, based on a survey of European and US businesses with annual sales of more than $250 million (£150 million), suggests that crucial technology issues are still being batted between the IT and telecoms departments of large companies.

These issues could include how best to set up an intranet or which mobile phone



company should be used by employees. Companies also face the key question of how to use the Internet to their advantage. According the the Gartner Group, most European companies believe that these issues should be dealt with by their IT departments. After all, many British board members are accountants by training, and find IT issues boring and complicated.

Is this situation likely to change in the near future? Peter Kirwan, editor of Computing magazine, says: "We are seeing a generational shift happening,but there's a lot of older people who need to get out of the way first."

☐ THE US may end up with a different technological standard for third-generation mobile phones to Europe and Japan, according to Siemens, the German engineering giant. The situation would be a disaster for the global mobile phone market, which hopes growth will be fuelled by a single worldwide standard. But the US and Europe cannot agree. "There's always room for a compromise," Volker Jung, executive director of Siemens, said. "But at the moment, it looks like a battle."

CHRIS AYRES

Yves of change

YVES-THIBAULT de Silguy, the all-conquering father of the euro, has been spotted around Paris in an unusual posture. On his knees, and with his hands clasped imploringly in front of him.

Let me explain. De Silguy, one of two French Commissioners, sees his five-year term of office expire at the end of the year. He is desperate to stay and see through the rest of the great euro experiment.

His problem is France's peculiar power-sharing arrangements, which require one Commissioner to be Socialist and the other Gaullist. The Socialist half, Edith Cresson, is not only at retirement age but is so badly enmired in domestic trouble that she cannot hope to survive. She has even lost the support of Lionel Jospin, her fellow Socialist and successor as Prime Minister.

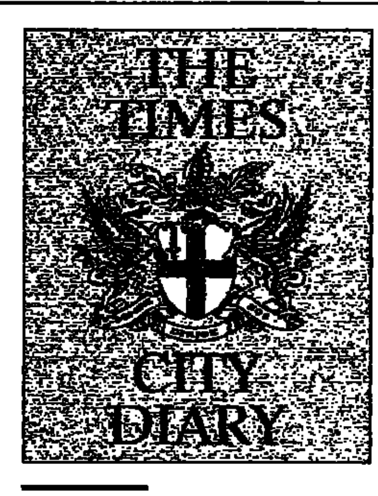

De Silguy is forced to plead for his job with the powers that be

It is unthinkable for the Socialists to lose their Commissioner but for de Silguy to carry on. But no one can think of two possible successors. So de Silguy has been reduced to pleading for his job on personal visits in recent days both to Jospin and to Jacques Chirac, the French President and a fellow Gaullist.

"It's a very, very fluid situation," says my Paris source. "Chirac is uncertain, and Jospin's in a quandary."

MY ATTENTION is drawn to the William Hill prospectus and the list of non-executives. One is Michael Blackburn, a former partner at Deloitte & Touche. I idly study his previous form. He has a few directorships, but two stick in the mind.

He was in at the start at Aerostructures Hamble, one of the worst market flotations of the 1990s. And he was at Blue Arrow, which ended a few careers in the 1980s. Still, life's a gamble, isn't it?



Just a snifter

BIZARRE scenes at the launch of South African Breweries' £4 billion flotation in London, where City journalists are handed a prospectus on arrival and told they will have to hand it back before they leave. It is some American nonsense to do with the SEC, which insists the document can only be given to bona fide investors.

So fleeting was the glimpse afforded that we might have missed news of directors' generous relocation expenses from South Africa. Two get £100,000 a year for three years, a third a total of £150,000. Graham Mackay, chief executive, says: "You have to realise that in South Africa the price of a five-bedroom house with a swimming pool and an acre of land in a good area would get you little more than a lock-up in Bayswater."

I TRUST Allied Domecq, waiting patiently to do a much-needed deal with Seagram, the Canadian drinks group, has seen the latest edition of Fortune.

There is a lengthy interview with Edgar Bronfman Jr, the 43-year-old family scion who took Seagram into Hollywood and music. He doesn't mention drinks once.

Instead Bronfman explains how entertainment is going to come right. He sold his du Pont shares to pay for his entry into Hollywood, and du Pont shares nearly doubled, says Fortune *acidly. He sold out of Time Warner before those shares started to climb. He bought MCA shortly before Steven Spielberg left.*

So the joke in Hollywood is that Bronfman is infotainment's answer to "Wrong Way" Corrigan. He was a US flier in the 1930s who left New York for California, and landed in Ireland instead.

Cape of hope

FOR the price of a lock-up in Bayswater, John Aspinall's son is selling a villa in South Africa, the haunt of pop stars and super-models and voted one of the world's top 50 houses to rent. Cost, £1 million, according to Christie & Co, the estate agent.

Very little of the above is true, except for the sale by Bassa Aspinall of the Villa Romelia, just outside Cape Town, but it is all in the estate agent's brochure anyway.

That headline price of £1 million is actually £800,000. The villa was in the top 50 in the *Condé Nast Travellers Guide*, the estate agent tells me — except that it wasn't.

And as to pop stars and super-models, well, Naomi Campbell dropped in once but never stayed. Ditto Mark Thatcher, the only other celebrity anyone can think of. Celebrity?

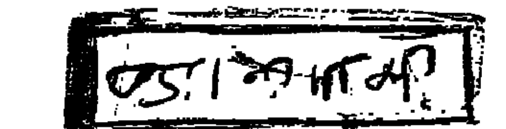
Christie mutters engagingly about "agent's poetic licence". Still, the villa looks nice.

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk



"How do I eradicate my broker's number?"



Rail reform urged as operators escape lightly

By Fraser Nelson

THE Government faced fresh calls to scrap the regulatory regime of financial penalties governing Britain's privatised railways yesterday as it emerged that some of the worst performers have escaped with minuscule fines.

John O'Brien, the rail franchising director, said he was powerless to alter the regime, which charged £7.35 million in punctuality fines over a 12-week period yet handed out £276 million in subsidies.

FirstGroup, which was threatened with legal action because of delays on its North Western Trains franchise, has been given an £8,000 punctuality bonus — even though its service continued to slide over the past three months of 1998. Chiltern Railways — which has seen the number of late trains on its London to Birmingham route double since April last year — has been charged a total of £171,000 in punctuality penalties yet received an £8.9 million subsidy. This comes after three of its managers agreed to sell out to John Laing, the construction company, in a deal that will net them £500,000 each.

Mr O'Brien said: "The incentive regime is not a question of how I feel about the train companies' performance. The payments I make are a matter of contracts. They are not discretionary." He emphasised that, for the first time, Opraf is receiving more penalties than it is handing out in bonuses under the regime.

Gerald Corbett, chief executive of Railtrack, a long-standing critic of the financial architecture of the railway system, said: "The current incentive regime works for Railtrack — if we eliminated all delays caused by us, our profits would be up by £100 million."

Mr Corbett, who has called for the introduction of a scheme where rail operators' subsidies are linked to performance, added: "But it was designed for an era where there was no passenger growth. To use the same system during the growth we are seeing now is an enormous challenge."

Yesterday, Opraf confirmed last week's report in *The Times* that named Chiltern, Cardiff and Thames trains as the three sharpest fallers in performance over 1998.

National Express's ScotRail franchise, which has again been named the most punctual service in the UK, has so far picked up £4.93 million in bonuses for the 36 weeks to December 12.

Stagecoach's South West Trains franchise was hardest hit — paying £3.26 million for the same period in which its level of delayed trains increased by 22 per cent.

Stagecoach intends to pass on much of these charges to Railtrack, which has to pay up if the delays were caused by infrastructure problems.

The incentive regime was written before privatisation took place. Under European law, the Government cannot change the system without approval from the train companies.

Mr O'Brien, who is to step down from his post, said: "I don't have the power to change the payments, because these are bilateral contracts. They can be changed, but only with the train operators' consent."

Almost every contract lasts until at least 2003, with some stretching to 2015.

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Commentary, page 27

WINNERS AND LOSERS

BIGGEST PENALTIES

		OPRAF PENALTY	FIXED SUBSIDY
Stagecoach	South West Trains	-£3,259,000	£43,447,846
Go-Ahead	Thames Trains	-£1,915,000	£17,734,154
Connex	Connex South Eastern	-£1,577,000	£60,521,538
National Express	Central Trains	-£1,259,000	£87,566,538
Prism	Cardiff Railway	-£1,142,000	£12,962,769

BIGGEST BONUSES

		OPRAF BONUS	FIXED SUBSIDY
National Express	ScotRail	£4,928,000	£86,277,462
MTC Trust	Northern Spirit	£1,168,000	£87,584,538
Prism	LTS Rail	£454,000	£17,865,000
FirstGroup	Great Eastern	£457,000	£10,005,231
Connex	Connex South Central	£714,000	£38,963,769

Source: Opraf — Covers financial year from April 1 to December 12

ROY RILEY



John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, was in the City yesterday at the launch of trading in Channel Tunnel Rail Link 2028 and 2038 bonds to raise £1.65 billion; while £1 billion will be raised with the launch of shorter-dated 2010 bonds. Demand for the bonds, which carry a government guarantee, was said to be substantial. The link will run to Waterloo.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Stansted 49% growth helps to lift BAA

BAA, the operator of Britain's main airports, said that it handled 7.6 million passengers in January, a 7.3 per cent increase on the same time last year. The big growth areas in the month came at Stansted, a base for many of the no-frills budget airlines, and from flights to Ireland.

Traffic at Stansted rose 49 per cent, although the Essex airport carries about a tenth of the volumes of Heathrow, where passenger growth was up 3.3 per cent to 4.3 million. Gatwick passenger volumes grew by 10 per cent, while Glasgow and Edinburgh airports clocked growth of 4.7 per cent and 6.5 per cent respectively. The biggest segment of BAA's passenger figures, scheduled European flights, grew by 7.9 per cent while passengers to the Irish Republic were up by 14 per cent. UK domestic passenger growth came in at only 3.6 per cent.

Bid hits Focus's costs

FOCUS DYNAMICS, the engineering group, yesterday gave warning that "significant costs" were incurred in defending the company from a takeover bid by Corporate Resolve, an Ofex-listed investment firm. The offer for the entire share capital of Focus was announced in November and withdrawn last week. Sir James McKinnon, chairman, said: "Focus Dynamics has been forced to incur significant costs defending itself from an unsolicited and unwelcome offer from a bidder whose ability to fund the offer was unconvincing at best."

Ferguson in £13m sale

FERGUSON INTERNATIONAL is selling its food, personal care and beverage division to Labelling Dynamics, a European manufacturer of self-adhesive labels, for £13 million. The division, which also includes a flexible packaging and a foil packaging business, made an operating profit of £1.3 million in the year to February 28, 1998. However, difficult trading conditions mean it will record a significant loss this year. Ferguson proposes to sell its remaining businesses and return funds to shareholders. The shares were unchanged at 41p yesterday.

Fishers hooks rival

FISHERS INTERNATIONAL, the loss adjuster, has continued on the acquisition trail by confirming that it is to buy its smaller rival, Pycraft & Arnold, the AIM-quoted company. The recommended cash and shares offer values Pycraft at 69p a share, or £10.8 million. A full cash alternative is worth 67.066p. Fishers said the deal will bring significant cost savings and stronger management to a business with increased critical mass.

Heal's shares rise 10%

SHARES in Heal's were up 10 per cent yesterday after the home furnishings retailer said sales in the 20 weeks to January 30 were up 4 per cent. Martin Boase, chairman, said the performance during the Christmas and winter sales periods was very satisfactory against the difficult retail climate. He expected "significantly enhanced sales" at its flagship store in central London from the end of this month when the refurbishment of its main furniture trading floor will be finished.

Rexam expands in US

REXAM, the packaging company, has agreed to buy Sussex Plastics Inc for £19 million. Sussex, which had sales of £18.5 million in 1997 and net assets of £7.9 million, is based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is a custom injection-moulding manufacturer of plastic packaging, primarily for the cosmetics market. Lorand Spyers-Duran, the current chief executive of Sussex and a part-owner, will retain his post while the business is merged with Rexam's beauty packaging operations.

PIC International passes on interim dividend

By Robert Cole, city correspondent

PIC INTERNATIONAL, the pig breeding technology firm, will not pay an interim dividend this year as the company gave warning of massive oversupply problems in the market for pork that continue to disrupt its business.

PIC, which does not farm pigs itself but supplies breeding stock to pork farmers, yesterday said that the parlous state of the market was leading to a sharp decline in orders.

The company incurred operating losses in the six months to December 31, though interest credits meant that PIC managed to report a pre-tax profit of £2.1 million — that, however, is a 94 per cent fall from its figures for the same period in 1997.

Brian Baldock, chairman, said the conditions in the pig meat industry were the worst for 50 years. Prices of pork have plummeted as farmers switched production facilities away from beef two years ago, when the BSE scare was at its peak. The oversupply has been exacerbated by a fall in demand from Russia.

Mr Baldock said that the price of pork had fallen "well below" the costs of production.

PIC is all that remains of Dalgety, the food group that was radically restructured with large segments of the business sold off. Shares in PIC shed 10 per cent yesterday to close at 62½p and are now trading at barely a quarter of what they were last summer.

For the first half of 1997 PIC paid a 6p dividend. Mr Baldock said a decision about the final dividend for this year will be made in September, when prospects will be clearer.

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US rivals join bid battle for Field paper group

By Paul Armstrong

FIELD GROUP, the paper and packaging company, is at the centre of a bidding war after Shorewood Packaging Corporation of the US yesterday unveiled a counter offer.

Shorewood has bid 350p a share for the UK group, forcing Field's directors to withdraw their backing for the offer of 320p a share made three weeks ago by Chesapeake Corporation, also an American paper group.

Field is now recommending its shareholders accept Shorewood's offer, which values the company at £211.4 million, though there is believed to be a strong chance that Chesapeake will return with a higher bid. Chesapeake would say only that it was considering its position in the light of Shorewood's offer.

Field shares were trading at 227p the day before it entered takeover talks with Chesapeake. They closed yesterday at 356p, up from 343½p previously.

Both suitors view Field as an ideal launching pad into Europe, enabling them to be part of the industry's worldwide consolidation. Field, in turn, is keen for the financial backing offered by the American bidders. The paper and packaging sector has struggled on the stock market for some time, making it difficult for Field to raise the equity needed to underpin an expansion into Europe.

Keith Gilchrist, Field's chief executive, said both bidders offered strategic advantages to his company. "It comes down to price at the end of the day," Mr Gilchrist said. "There is not a lot to choose between them."

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ACCOUNTANCY

Changing face of reporting

Anthony Carey praises standards set by the winners of this year's published accounts awards

It's scrumptious. That is the judges' view of Bulmers' annual report, the newly announced winner of the smaller company section of the 1999 Stock Exchange and Chartered Accountants Annual Awards for Published Accounts.

The report leads off with a lively front cover illustration of an inviting glass of cider together with the caption "the world's leading cider maker". There's no mistaking the market the company is in, nor its place in it. Inside, Bulmers explains concisely that it will continue to measure its success in terms of market leadership, product quality, increasing shareholder value and rewarding employment opportunities for its employees. The report's real success, though, lies in its discussing these issues in an informative way that offers an insight into Bulmers' corporate culture and its relationship with the providers of its human and financial capital. The report also reads as a seamless whole rather than appearing to be a series of disjointed sections written by a number of different people, an unfortunately frequent occurrence.

The company's performance relative to the market is discussed and some percentage figures provided of sales volume increases. This information is put into context with a helpful analysis of market trends affecting the cider industry with reference made to the sale of alcopops, taxation, advertising and changing consumption patterns.

The chairman seems to encapsulate Bulmers' philosophy when he says that "your company has been trading for 110 years. We believe in taking the long view in the establishment of our orchards, in the building of brands and in our approach to investment at home and overseas, but above all we seek to ensure that we have the right people in the right place now and in the future".

Far more space is devoted to employee issues in this report than is the norm, with a discussion on employee development, Bulmers' new Employee Learning Centre and the role of the longstanding Employee Council. The names of the 77 employees who have been with the company for more than 30 years are also included.

Boots, the winner of the larger company section of this year's reporting awards has, like Bulmers, strong family roots and headquarters in the heart of England. It, too, devotes a section of its winning report to its people and, in addition, has others on the environment and the community.

Boots states on the first page of its report that its long-term goals primarily focus on generating strong cashflows and superior returns for shareholders. It has calculated that the value of payments made to shareholders in the five years to March 1998 in the form of dividends and one-off payments totalled £1.9 billion which, when added to share price movements, was equivalent to a return of 128 per cent over the period, or 18 per cent on an annualised basis. Most unusually, details are also provided of how this measure of performance compares with that in ten peer companies. Boots ranked fourth behind SmithKline Beecham, Tesco and GUS, but ahead of, for example, Kingfisher, Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's, not to mention Sears.

As highlighted recently in *The 21st Century Annual Report*, the whole area of annual report disclosure outside the audited financial statements is likely to increase significantly in importance. It embraces a wide range of overlapping topics including non-financial measures of performance, the value of a company's intangibles, shareholder value and future prospects as well as social, employee and environmental reporting. This vital element of the annual report is now overdue for a co-ordinated review, having developed over time in a higgledy-piggledy fashion.

The winning reports for 1999 help to establish benchmarks of what is achievable.



Anthony Carey says top reports help to establish benchmarks

Anthony Carey is director of the Centre for Business Performance of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

☐ *The 21st Century Annual Report is available on 0171-920-8624 or on the Internet at: icaew.co.uk*

Sleeper derailed at Willesden Junction

IT IS not often that you find that a youthful indiscretion has come to light in the disclosure documents produced during the negotiation of a merger.

However, the impending disappearance of the firm of Moores Rowland into BDO Stoy Hayward has triggered just such an instance. Once upon a time I served my articles with what was then Edward Moore & Sons. It was a firm whose great days were already past. But the full realisation of this had not really sunk in. They had been founded in 1866. They had been the great auditors and advisers to the printing and brewing industries. Sir Edward Cecil Moore himself had been Lord Mayor of London in 1922 and president of the English ICA in 1923. His portrait still hangs above the staircase in the institute's headquarters in Moorgate Place.

But by the time I was employed there as an articled clerk, the grandeur was much reduced. The firm had missed its opportunities. Clients had merged and gone for growth, but the firm had not followed the same route. The really big listed clients had either gone or were about to go.

There was an apocryphal story that the firm had been approached just after the war by an up-and-coming bunch of people called Cooper Brothers who fancied a merger with Moores to bring them respectability. But Moores was supposed to have considered them mere upstarts and told them that they had no future. If you look at the portrait of Sir Edward you can see that even then complacency had set in.

On the other hand, such a firm was a terrific place to learn about business and industry. In your three years you worked everywhere from huge printing works to stockbrokers, from charities to breweries, from engineering works to small private clubs. The insight you gained into how different businesses worked was immense. And it was also fun. Or it could often be fun.

There was a terrible place, an engineering company out in the wilds of Willesden Junction, to which everyone dreaded being exiled. And that was where my downfall took place. The managing director claimed that he had found me asleep in the boardroom. I have always denied this. Early signs of rigor mortis might well have set in as I perused the bought ledger, but complete collapse had not occurred. It didn't matter. I was removed from the audit. My fellow students reckoned this a considerable triumph. But the partners thought it a disgrace.

It is this tale from the early career of someone who was saved from accountancy by journalism that has cropped up in the documentation of the merger that means that the Moores name will vanish on March 1. It was hardly isolated behaviour. At what was known as the Articled Clerks' Dinner, one fellow student, who these days is a senior City specialist in regulation, was progressing speedily around the balcony of what is now the Institute of Directors on his hands and knees. He came to an abrupt halt against an obstacle. He looked up and found the senior partner looking down. He was asked what he was up to. "Playing trains, sir," he replied and carried on.

On another celebrated occasion an audit manager, who has again gone on to great things, found it oppressively hot on a June afternoon after a visit to the pub at lunchtime. He was found by the client with a knotted handkerchief on his head, no shirt or tie, his feet in a cooling bowl of water and the radio commentary from Wimbledon clamped to his ear. There is a long history to all this. Ian Brindle, now worldwide chief of risk management at PricewaterhouseCoopers, will tell you of the time that late in the evening when playing cricket with ruler and ball of paper he was caught at wide mid-on by Dunlop's finance director as he put his head round the door to see how the auditors were getting on.

The demise of the last vestiges of Edward Moore & Sons tells us that an era has passed. Business organisations that fail to adapt to changing circumstances will always vanish. The failure of the Moores partners was not to see the firm in the contexts of the rest of the profession and of the trends that their clients were following. They liked a cosy life in which they hoped to bask off a past reputation. What they should have been doing was what we junior staff were doing — observing client companies and working out for ourselves why some succeeded and others failed.

And where their strategies were leading them. Long live BDO Stoy Hayward.

ROBERT BRUCE

Bowman pointed the way at PW

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

THERE is an irony in the humiliation and fining of the Coopers half of the newly merged PricewaterhouseCoopers over their past work for the late Robert Maxwell's empire. For Price Waterhouse always refused to have anything to do with the overweight media mogul. The firm's senior partner through the crucial years was Sir Jeffery Bowman. He never forgot his experiences in his early days as a partner when the firm was appointed as independent reporting accountants to Pergamon during the takeover battle that subsequently drew the famous Department of Trade opinion that Maxwell "was not a person who could be relied upon to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly quoted company".

Bowman did most of the leg work for the investigation. And for ever after, whenever Maxwell bought a company that Price Waterhouse audited, the firm would quietly resign. Now they wish that Coopers had done likewise. "I know we are not supposed to refer to Coopers as 'them'," mused one PW partner this week, "but for a few days we are going to."

Testament . . .

COLIN SHARMAN, the globe-trotting worldwide chieftain of KPMG, has obviously not updated his CV for a while. Fellow leaders at the World Economic Forum jamboree in Davos the other week were startled at Sharman's entry in the event's directory, known locally as "The Bible". He was listed as "Chairman Elect, KPMG and Ernst & Young (merger)". We all thought the merger had been called off a year ago. Maybe no one has got Sharman off a plane long enough to tell him.

. . . of youth

THE English ICA has at last caught up with the post-modern ways of the youth of this country. It has just produced a "*Chartered Accountants — factfinder*" to provide the young with an idea of what the profession involves. It contains a series of case studies of trainee and qualified accountants. What is startling is the front cover. Under the slogan "The BIG Picture" it depicts two people at the cinema eating popcorn and screaming at whatever they have just seen. A typical reaction to a first glance at what the finance director fondly believes the preliminary results should look like presumably.

ROBERT BRUCE

Resilient performance by equities

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

UNDATED

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7666				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	142.45	151.79	- 0.82	..
-do- NAV to Jan 19	140.39	149.39	..	..
UK Equity Safeguard	114.71	122.69	+ 0.58	2.02
-do- NAV to May 19	110.98	110.98		.
US Eqy Safeguard	96.37	102.42	+ 0.04	
Cash	951.52	956.28†	.	6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	408.03	432.51	- 8.12	1.80
UK Small Cos	87.94	94.05	- 0.20	0.50
FTSE 250 Index	103.97	111.19	- 0.96	1.89
Gowett UK Index	#22.014	#23.240	- 0.74	5.76
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	88.66	91.66	+ 0.18	6.66
Monthly Inc	43.88	46.93†	- 0.10	7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	361.89	381.88	- 5.83	0.17
American Strat	172.87	184.45	- 6.14	
JG US Index	#28.552	#30.081	- 0.36	4.50
European Gen	424.38	449.08	-16.29	.
European Strat	207.33	221.74	- 7.54	.
Japan Gen	104.91	111.82	- 0.07	
Asia Pacific	59.06	62.92	- 0.82	1.09
Pacific Strat	82.12	87.82†	- 0.72	.
Greater China	137.35	146.89	- 0.84	...
Latin America	54.92	58.74	- 0.05	
Int Growth	191.39	204.69	- 4.84	0.11
Balanced Exemps	161.51	168.09	..	2.10
Global Strategy	46.58	48.74	- 0.90	.
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
AXA Equity & Law Unit Tst				
Balanced Acc	80.75	85.90	- 1.04	1.77
Balanced Inc	72.54	77.17	- 0.94	1.77
Brit Enzell	125.40	133.40	- 2.30	2.30

Tank shot not crime of violence

Regina v Ministry of Defence, Ex parte Walker

Before Lord Justice Auld, Lord Justice Chadwick and Sir Christopher Staughton

[Judgment February 5]

A soldier who, while serving in Bosnia as part of the United Nations Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia, was seriously injured as a result of a single round fired by a Serbian tank into the accommodation block he was based in, was rightly refused compensation by the Ministry of Defence under an scheme it operated providing compensation for members of the Armed Forces who were the victims of crimes of violence while serving abroad.

The scheme was designed to compensate for injuries resulting from action akin to domestic crime and not from warlike or military conduct while peacekeeping in a foreign battlefield.

The Court of Appeal so held, Lord Justice Chadwick dissenting, in a reserved judgment dismissing the appeal of Sergeant Trevor Walker from the dismissal by Mr Justice Latham in the Queen's Bench Division on February 9, 1998, of his application for judicial review of the refusal of the Ministry of Defence on October 31, 1996, to pay compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation (Overseas) Scheme for injuries he suffered on May 3, 1995, when he was a corporal in 21 Engineer Regiment based at Maglaj School, Magla, an observation post and an accommodation unit housing the British contingent.

His duties were to assist in the construction of a road as part of an attempt to rebuild the civilian economy. His unit was armed but was only permitted to use force in self-defence.

After undergoing 13 operations he had had his right leg amputated above the knee.

Mr David Pannick, QC and Mr Michael Fordham for Sergeant Walker; Mr Philip Sales for the ministry.

LORD JUSTICE AULD said that the discretionary scheme was introduced by the ministry on December 1, 1979, to provide comparable levels of compensation to members of the Armed Forces injured abroad as a result of crimes of violence, which would have been awarded by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board had the injury been caused by a crime committed in Great Britain.

In a letter of January 9, 1980, distributed within the Ministry, it was stated that all details of the scheme had not yet been finally decided, but it did not apply where the act of violence which resulted in injury or death of a serviceman was committed "by an enemy where a state of war exists or a warlike situation is declared to exist".

That exclusion was not mentioned when the scheme was first published in the Army General and Administrative Instructions in May 1990, distributed within the Services and available to all personnel.

The Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Mr Nicholas Soames, in a parliamentary statement on December 5, 1994, taking account of the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia said that compensation under the scheme would not be payable as a result of "war operations or military activity by warring factions", and he distinguished the position in Northern Ireland where terrorist operations were not deemed to be war operations or military activity by warring factions.

Mr Pannick, while acknowledging that the ministry was entitled to determine and formulate the criteria it wished to govern the scheme, maintained that it had acted unlawfully in that (i) it misinterpreted its own criteria; (ii) the criteria were irrational; and (iii) it had applied the criteria unfairly.

He contended that Sergeant Walker's injuries were not the result of war operations or military activity by warring factions but from conduct amounting to an international crime, the deliberate, it was assumed, firing at a UN peacekeeping base, and so outside the exclusion from the scheme.

He sought support from the United Nations' Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, adopted by the General Assembly on December 9, 1994, now endorsed by the United Nations Personnel Act 1997, and submitted that the Convention's provisions drew a distinction between actions against peacekeeping forces and actions against UN forces engaged in enforcement action, and that the former were crimes in violation of international law.

His Lordship said that the true meaning of the scheme's policy was a matter for the court to decide; misinterpretation of its own policy might render the ministry's decision defective in the same way as ignoring it.

But if the policy was not as clearly expressed as it might have been, there was nevertheless a spectrum of meaning as to what might constitute military activity, and the court should respect the ministry's evaluation of it unless it was irrational: see *R v Monopolies and Mergers Commission, Ex parte South Yorkshire Transport Ltd* ([1993] 1 WLR 23, 32).

The scheme, as originally introduced and as announced by the minister in 1994, was intended to mirror that of the domestic scheme, and did not extend to violence, criminal or otherwise, resulting from war operations or military activity to which servicemen might become subject while on duty abroad.

Second, as Mr Sales submitted, the term "military activity" and an international crime of violence were not mutually exclusive, and the distinction relied on by Mr Pannick did not arise. The exclusion of compensation for injuries resulting from war operations or military activities by warring factions from a scheme intended to compensate for criminal conduct necessarily contemplated that criminal conduct could take one of those forms, otherwise there was no need for its exclusion.

Third, any other construction of the scheme would cause great difficulties in its application.

It was assumed that the tank fired deliberately. If the round was fired at an opposing enemy faction and had hit the base by a mistake short of criminal recklessness, Mr Pannick accepted that that would come within the scheme's exclusion.

Practical difficulties in the application of the criteria could occur where issues arose as to whether enemy fire or other military activity was intentional, reckless or just careless.

Thus, even if there was some lack of precision in the formulation of the exclusionary criteria, the ministry's interpretation of it satisfied the test in *South Yorkshire Transport*.

As to the argument that there was no rational basis for depriving a peacekeeper of compensation for injury caused by an international crime, his Lordship said that there was no irrationality in the ministry's adoption of a scheme that sought to remove from the scheme a feature peculiar to the life of a member of the Armed Services abroad in a theatre of war or where there was military activity between warring factions, but not present at home, namely the risk of injury from warlike behaviour.

Moreover, the ministry was entitled to develop the scheme with the problems of the type posed by Bosnia particularly in mind, just as it was entitled to take the view that the circumstances in Northern Ireland were materially different from those in Bosnia.

Furthermore, the availability of an indemnity from the UN for payments made to UN personnel injured by warring factions did not make irrational a general policy of the ministry not to make such payments.

As to the argument that fairness demanded that the ministry should have informed soldiers going to Bosnia of any exclusionary provision in the scheme on which it intended to rely, any suggestion of unfairness was unfounded. Such knowledge as Sergeant Walker might have had of the original scheme was sketchy and, as the judge said, "anecdotal".

Moreover, it was difficult to see what steps, if he had appreciated the precise effect of the scheme before going to Bosnia, he could and would have taken to ameliorate its consequences for him in the event of injury from military activity while there.

It gave his Lordship no pleasure in finding against Sergeant Walker on all his grounds of appeal. He was a very brave soldier in the performance of his hazardous duties in Bosnia, and very courageous in the face of the terrible injuries suffered in consequence.

LORD JUSTICE CHADWICK, dissenting, said that the decision to reject Sergeant Walker's claim was taken by the Army Board and communicated to him by the ministry, but there was no indication whether that board drew any distinction between "war operations" and "military activity by warring factions".

It was not possible to identify whether under the ministry's policy there was any such distinction, or into what category the attack on the Maglaj School was thought by the board to fall.

There was nothing to suggest from the parliamentary statement of December 5, 1994, that the minister thought he was announcing any new policy. The point he was seeking to make was that compensation was not payable in respect of injuries suffered as a result of war operations, because those would not be "criminal injuries" in the accepted sense.

Furthermore, there was nothing to suggest the minister intended to draw a distinction between "war operations" and "military activity by warring factions". That was confirmed by a later parliamentary statement he made in respect of Sergeant Walker's case on May 20, 1996.

In his Lordship's view the true policy was that compensation under the scheme was not available where injury occurred as the result of "war or warlike operations," and the ministry conceded in argument it did not rely on "war operations" in the instant case.

Therefore, the question the board should have addressed was: did Sergeant Walker's injury occur as a result of warlike operations? There was a significant difference between that question and the question whether his injury occurred as a result of military activity.

The discharge of the single tank shell might be regarded as a military activity: firing at an accommodation block occupied by a peacekeeping unit might well not be regarded as a warlike operation.

His Lordship could see no reason why a decision-taker addressing himself to what was the correct question, and taking account of the UN Convention, should not conclude that firing at the accommodation block was not a warlike operation.

If the board did not draw any distinction between "war operations" and "military activity between warring factions" and in the light of the ministry's concession, the board's decision could not be upheld. The appeal should be allowed.

Sir Christopher Staughton gave a judgment agreeing that the appeal should be dismissed.

Solicitors: Leigh Day & Co; Treasury Solicitor.

Beer supply tie is enforceable

Passmore v Morland and Others

Before Lord Justice Beldam, Lord Justice Potter and Lord Justice Chadwick

[Judgment February 2]

A beer supply agreement which, as between the original parties, was prohibited by article 85(1) of the EEC Treaty (cmnd 5179-II) and so automatically void under the provisions of article 85(2), was, nevertheless, enforceable by an assignee from one party in circumstances in which, if an agreement in identical terms had been entered into by the assignee and the other party at the time of the assignment, that agreement would not have been prohibited.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing an appeal from the judgment of Mr Justice Laddie on July 10, 1998 whereby he struck out the claim of the plaintiff, Mr David Passmore, for damages from the defendant, Morland plc, for breach of article 85(1) and restitution of sums said to have been unlawfully charged by them in supplying beer to the plaintiff; and gave judgment for Morland on a counterclaim for damages for breach of the tie.

Article 85 of the EEC Treaty provides:

"(1) The following shall be prohibited as incompatible with the common market: all agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings and concerted practices which may affect trade between member states and which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the common market...

"(2) Any agreements of decisions prohibited pursuant to this article shall be automatically void.

"(3) The provisions of paragraph 1 may, however, be declared inapplicable in the case of:- any agreement or category of agreements between undertakings: ... which contributes to improving the production or distribution of goods or to promoting technical or economic progress, while allowing customers a fair of the resulting benefit, which does not: (a) impose on the undertakings concerned restrictions which are not indispensable to the attainment of those objectives: (b) afford such undertakings the possibility of eliminating competition in respect of a substantial part of the products in question."

Mr Gerald Barling, QC and Mr Mark Brealey for Mr Passmore; Mr Nicholas Green, QC and Mr Aidan Robertson for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE CHADWICK said that the plaintiff was the tenant of a public house in Aldershot under a tenancy granted by the second defendant, the Inntrepreneur Pub Company Ltd, under the terms of a lease, for 20 years from February 1, 1992, containing a tie requiring the lessee to purchase from Inntrepreneur its successors or assigns, or its nominees and from no other such person all such beers as he shall require for sale in the premises.

On July 29, 1992 the reversion of the lease was transferred by Inntrepreneur to Morland Brewery Estates Ltd who, on February 5, 1993 granted a lease of the reversion to the first defendant.

When the tenancy was granted, Inntrepreneur was the owner of some 4,500 licensed premises, let on terms including a similar tie.

On July 1, 1992 Inntrepreneur notified its standard form lease to the Commission of the European Communities and sought a declaration pursuant to article 85(3) that the provisions of article 85(1) were inapplicable.

The application was later withdrawn and subsequently the plaintiff, through his solicitor, wrote to Inntrepreneur and said that it was understood that the withdrawal had followed advice that they would not get the exemption sought; and that accordingly the plaintiff took the view that the tie was unenforceable.

It was accepted on the appeal that as the law stood, following the decision by the Court of Appeal in *Gibbs Mew plc v Gemmell* ([1998] Eu LR 588), shortly after Mr Justice Laddie gave judgment, the plaintiff could not pursue the claims for damages and restitution made in the writ.

The argument before the court has proceeded on the basis that the plaintiff intended, with leave, to add a claim for a declaration that the tie was void and unenforceable.

It was accepted, for the purposes of the appeal, that it could be assumed that Morland's tied estate was so small in relation to the number of licensed outlets that a tie in a lease granted by Morland could not be regarded as having any material effect on trade within the common market and so could not infringe the prohibition in article 85(1).

But it was submitted on behalf of the plaintiff that was irrelevant. The relevant questions were said to be:

(i) whether the tie was prohibited by article 85(1) during the period that Inntrepreneur was landlord; and if so:

(ii) whether the tie having been prohibited by article 85(1), and so automatically void at the commencement of the tenancy, remained void after the circumstances which had given rise to the article 85(1) prohibition had ceased to exist upon the change of landlord.

In that context, Morland was willing to accept for the purpose of the application before the judge, and for the purpose of the appeal that it might be assumed that the tie contained in the lease would, for so long as Inntrepreneur was the landlord of the premises, have been prohibited under article 85(1), and so would have been void by virtue of article 85(2). In those circumstances it was only the second question which falls for decision.

Article 85(2) had to be construed in conjunction with article 85(1). In particular, article 85(2) had to be construed in the light of an appreciation that the prohibition in article 85(1) was not an absolute prohibition; but rather a prohibition which arose when and continued for so long as it was needed to promote the freedom of competition within the common market which was the stated objective of article 85(1).

The prohibition was temporaneous, or transient, rather than absolute; in the sense that it endured for a finite period of time, the time when it was needed, rather than all time.

With that in mind the question of construction to which the language used in article 85(2) gave rise to could be stated in these terms: did article 85(2) mean that any agreements or decisions while prohibited pursuant to article 85(1) were be automatically void; or did it mean that any agreements or decisions once prohibited pursuant to article 85(1) were thereafter automatically void.

It was submitted on behalf of Mr Passmore that effect had to be given to the observation in paragraph 11 of the judgment in *Societe de Vente de Ciments et Betons de l'Est SA v Kerpen & Kerpen GmbH & Co KG* (Case 319/82) ([1983] ECR 4173) that the "nullity is absolute".

But that phrase had to be read in context. It was clear from the court's reference to *Societe Technique Miniere v Maschinenbau Ulm GmbH* (Case 56/65) ([1966] ECR 235, 245-246) that it was affirming that the automatic nullity applied to the provisions of the agreement only in so far as they were prohibited by article 85(1).

On a proper reading of the passage the observation did support the view that, as a matter of Community law, the nullity imposed by article 85(2) was an exact reflection of the prohibition imposed by article 85(1). If the prohibition was temporary, or transient, then so was the nullity.

It was submitted on behalf of Mr Passmore that the concept of temporaneous or transient nullity ought to be rejected as inconsistent with the decision in *Shell UK Ltd v Lostock Garage Ltd* ([1976] 1 WLR 1187).

The appeal and cross-appeal in that case concerned the enforceability of a petrol tie in English domestic law. Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, dissenting on that point, was prepared to hold (at p1198g) that a covenant in restraint of trade, valid at the time it was entered into, should not be enforced if circumstances after arose in which it would be unreasonable or unfair to enforce it. The other two members of the court disagreed.

Lord Justice Ormrod said (at p1202): "There is no authority to support it. It would introduce into the law an unprecedented discretion in the court to suspend for a time a term in a contract; the repercussions of this are quite unforeseeable and unmanageable."

Lord Justice Bridge said (at p1203f): "I am concerned that, under the new doctrine, the law can give the covenantor no clear indication at the outset of the extent of the relief to which he is entitled."

Those passages clearly reflect the concern, expressed by the European Court of Justice in *SA Brasserie de Haecht v Wilkin-Janssen* (Case 48/72) ([1973] ECR 77) that regard had to be had to what the court described as the general principle of legal certainty. But the problem was inherent in the application of article 85(1) of the EC Treaty.

In his Lordship's view, it had to be recognised that what was seen, in *Shell v Lostock*, as a wholly novel doctrine was now enshrined in Community competition law.

Agreements were prohibited when and while they were incompatible with competition in the Common Market and not otherwise.

His Lordship did not think it would be right to refuse to give effect to what, as it seemed to him, was the clear purpose and effect of article 85(1) and (2) because, in *Shell*, the Court of Appeal had held that that purpose had no place in the English domestic law of restraint of trade.

Lord Justice Potter and Lord Justice Beldam agreed.

Solicitors: Maitland Walker, Minehead; Kimbell & Co, Milton Keynes.

No lay assistance in county court

Milne v Kennedy and Others

In the absence of exceptional circumstances lay persons should not be permitted under section 28 of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 to represent litigants in the county court.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Waller) so held on January 28 allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Andrew Jonathan Milne, against an order of Judge Rich, QC, in Central London County Court giving leave for Mrs Zipporah Mainwaring to represent the defendants, Shirley Kennedy and six other members of the South Charity Leasehold Group, in his action over alleged unlawful removal from the group's committee.

LORD JUSTICE ALDOUS said the court was bound by *D v S (Rights of audience)* (*The Times* January 1, 1997). The judge had not identified any circumstances which could be regarded as exceptional and his decision could not be upheld.

Investigation inappropriate

In re L (a Minor) (Section 37 direction)

It was not appropriate for a judge to order an investigation by the local authority under section 37 of the Children Act 1989 in private law proceedings.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Butler-Sloss and Lord Justice Thorpe) so held on February 5 in allowing in part an appeal brought by the maternal grandmother of a child aged six of whom the grandmother was the primary carer against the decision of Judge Fisher on December 18, 1998 at Coventry County Court to order, inter alia, an investigation under section 37 in a case concerning contact.

LORD JUSTICE THORPE said that the judge had sought to justify the direction for an investigation on reliance on evidence given by the maternal grandmother in re-examination in October of an event which had occurred at the end of June when the child had behaved in a worrying way.

It was noteworthy that the event was not regarded as so fundamental as to require any immediate investigation and the judge's view that the threshold criteria for directing a section 37 investigation was in his Lordship's opinion wrong.

It was wrong to invoke public law procedure in private proceedings: see *In re C E (Section 37 direction)* ([1995] 1 FLR 26).

Interest was fixed above base rate

Provincial North West plc v Bennett and Another
Same v Williams and Another

Before Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Henry

[Judgment January 28]

A term of a facility letter from a bank offering a loan charging interest at the rate of 3 per cent above the bank's base rate was to be construed as referring to the bank's base rate for the time being and from time to time and thus did not require it to give written notice of variation of the base rate to the borrower.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing appeals by the defendants, Ian Geoffrey Bennett with Janice Elizabeth Bennett and Anthony David Williams with Marilyn Williams, from the judgment of Judge Howarth sitting in Manchester County Court on Janauary 6, 1998, in favour of the bank, Provincial North West plc.

Mr Geoffrey J. Pass for the defendants; Mr Robert Sterling for the bank.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that the facility letter dated May 20, 1988, from the bank to the defendants stated "interest will be charged at the rate of 3 per cent above Provincial Bank base rate" and debited to the account on the last day of each month.

It further provided that "the rate of interest may be varied at the absolute discretion of Provincial Bank plc by giving you 28 days notice in writing by ordinary post".

The essential question of construction was to what the words "Provincial Bank base rate" referred.

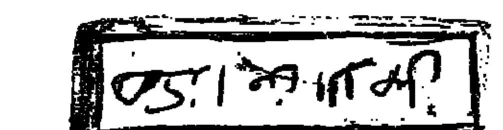
The judge held that the words referred to the bank's base rate for the time being and from time to time, there being no necessity to give notice to vary such base rate whether by 28 days notice in writing or at all. The 28-day notice, he held, related to any alteration of the 3 per cent rate above the bank's base rate.

The defendants contended that the words referred to the bank's base rate at the date they accepted the offer or at the date of draw down with the result that they would not be subject to pay interest of more than 3 per cent above a base rate of 8.5 per cent unless given notice in writing of variation of that rate.

There was no doubt that the judge's decision was correct. The critical words referred to a rate of interest which was inherently variable without prior notice. They could only be construed as charging interest at 3 per cent above the bank's base rate for the time being.

Lord Justice Henry agreed.

Solicitors: Davis Blank Furniss, Manchester and Lyons Wilson, Manchester; Hill & Co, Altrincham.



[هكذا عن الأصل]



THEATRE
Ian McKellen plays Prospero in Yorkshire
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THE TIMES

ARTS

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Kim Begley togs up for ENO's Parsifal
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SIMON WALKER



The director Jack Hill: A chance encounter with the adoring Quentin Tarantino rescued him from a 20-year semi-obscurity

Tarantino calls him the master

CINEMA: The director Jack Hill is suddenly in demand again, after a public homage by a very famous disciple. **Janie Lawrence** met him

It is perhaps little wonder that Jack Hill appears to be in a permanent state of bemusement. Until a short time ago the director of such 1970s "blaxploitation" films as *Coffy* and *Foxy Brown* was living in relative obscurity in Los Angeles. He hadn't directed anything since 1981 and his reputation was confined to a few select aficionados.

That is probably how it would have remained, but for the intervention of one ardent admirer. At a recent retrospective of Hill's work, none other than Quentin Tarantino pitched up and declared himself to be Hill's No 1 fan. "He had his hands full of posters and albums and he wanted me to autograph them. He was just like a real avid fan, really ebullient. He said: 'Man, I just love your dialogue'."

Hill was disarmed and delighted, and continues to be. But it transpired that he was unable to return the compliment. "I had heard of Tarantino and knew that he had won the Cannes award for *Pulp Fiction*, but I'd never seen any of his movies," says Hill.

Such have been Tarantino's publicly fulsome compliments that Hill's work is undergoing something of a resurgence. Tarantino has since declared that his own *Jackie Brown* is a straightforward homage to Hill's *Foxy Brown*, with the Jackie of the title being a direct reference to Hill. What's more, the lead role in *Jackie Brown* was taken by the *Foxy Brown* actress Pam Grier. "It's given me a new visibility," Hill says wryly. "Critics wouldn't even look at my films before, let alone review them. Now they call them Post-Modern."

Tarantino has put his money where his mouth is. Tomorrow Hill's 1975 film *Switchblade Sisters* is being re-released here by Tarantino's distribution company, Rolling Thunder Pictures *(see review opposite)*. Plainly this turn of events has taken the 66-year-old American by surprise. For despite the increasing glare of the publicity spotlight, he hasn't yet fallen into the auto-pilot responses of the much interviewed.

> 'I had heard of Tarantino but not seen his films'

Engagingly mild in manner, with the hesitant speech inflections of Superman Clark Kent, the man is not easily reconciled with his past work. "My films have been accused of being excessively violent," Hill admits. "But movies today are getting away with things that I wouldn't ever have dreamt of trying to do. I created characters that you become involved in. When you feel the violence, it's a dramatic violence rather than a visual violence. What you are feeling is nothing like what you see in films today."

As he justifiably points out, times have changed. "You've only got to see what's happening with Lewinsky and Clinton. It's on TV. Nothing's hidden any more."

Certainly the violence of *Switchblade Sisters* is greatly softened by what appears to modern eyes to be its entertainingly high camp content. Such lines as "Everybody's gotta be in a gang — it just ain't healthy to lone it. You dig?" are delivered in a world where the ketchup quota is less than a contemporary episode of *Casualty* and the nastiness of the characters is directly proportionate to the width of their bell bottoms.

"It was supposed to be a teenage *Clockwork Orange*," Hill says. "A fantasy about cute blondes in street gangs. In the 1970s audiences liked it, but today they love it."

It was never Hill's intention to be a film director. As a musician studying at UCLA his goal was to write film scores. Then he found himself helping on other student productions, notably alongside his classmate Francis Ford Coppola.

"Francis had not the slightest question in his mind that he would be the hottest director in Hollywood. He directed all his energies towards that. I never even had an agent."

Hill is rather vague, but it seems that for the past 18 years his main bread and butter has been writing TV scripts. Although he is now ready for what he terms "re-entry", he has no desire to contribute any further to the genre that Tarantino so reveres. In fact, pushed to name a film that he has recently enjoyed, Hill comes up with *Shakespeare In Love*.

"I find so many things offensive in modern films. I don't know where to begin. I walked out on *Once Were Warriors*. I heard students saying it was great art. But what's so wonderful about a man beating up his wife? The scripts that are being submitted to me now are generally so wild and brutal that I can't even get through them. Today I have a very different view of the world and I'm only interested in doing a film that's uplifting in some way."

Which begs the question of what on earth Hill makes of the films of Quentin Tarantino, his new best friend. "*Pulp Fiction* is the work of undoubtedly astonishing talents," he declares. And *Reservoir Dogs*? He shifts uncomfortably before answering. "I haven't seen it and I'm not going to. It's been described to me and I don't want that kind of violent input coming into my senses at this stage in my life."

He looks towards his wife of 25 years who nods in agreement. "When you're young you can abuse your body, and believe me I did. But when you reach a certain point, it's doing damage to your psyche and I just don't want that." Difficult as it is to imagine, Hill's most public fan may one day come to share this perspective.

Don't call Jason Patric an actor any more, not since he produced — as well as starred in — *Your Friends & Neighbors*. **Carol Allen** reports

And now, Jason and the arguments

Since his 1987 debut in the rather silly vampire movie *The Lost Boys*, 32-year-old Jason Patric has carved out a decent, middle-ranking career for himself as a leading actor in films of variable quality and success.

They include a highly praised performance in *Rush*, in which he played a drug-addicted cop, and his favourite role as a punch drunk boxer in *After Dark My Sweet*. On the downside, he was also in Barry Levinson's *Sleepers*, with Brad Pitt, Robert De Niro and Dustin Hoffman, playing one of a group of friends wreaking revenge on the reform school warden who had abused them as children, and co-starred with Sandra Bullock in his first and probably last action movie, the dreadful *Speed 2*.

"I can't forget it," he says, "because it was such a terrible experience for me as an actor, just miserable. I'd felt I was in a career rut and wanted to try a different genre, but making it just confirmed the instinct I'd always had to resist that type of role. I don't want to be a component in a $100 million machine."

The experience inspired him to take a leaf out of Bullock's book and form his own production company. Now the first fruits of that decision can be seen in *Your Friends & Neighbors*, writer/director Neil LaBute's follow-up movie to his acclaimed debut *In The Company of Men* and Patric's first producer credit. The film *(see review opposite)* is a stylish ensemble piece which takes a sourly realistic and witty look at sex and the city through the experiences of six thirtysomething urban professionals. Although it shares its distinctly jaundiced view of humanity with LaBute's earlier film, the resemblance, argues Patric, stops there.

"In Neil's first movie the main character's deliberately being malicious. This is about people reacting to their own needs and wants. Nobody's deliberately trying to hurt anyone and frankly they hurt themselves more than anyone else. He's showing us the subtext of people's lives, which we don't normally see. The handling of relationships in movies is usually pathetic, nothing to do with how real people live."

Despite his protestations to the contrary, Patric plays a character who will make women in particular gasp at his behaviour. If a woman dumps him, he blames her for the failure of the relationship and feels justified in taking cruel revenge. When his friend's wife rejects his advances, he verbally demolishes her: behaviour which he sees as the expression of "a healthy self image".

But Patric can find some good in him. "He's more complex than just a bastard or a misogynist," he says. "There's a perverse rationale to his logic. He has an inflexible set of rules for what he considers common decency. When someone crosses that line he feels he has a right to take action. It would be a lot easier for people to take if I were wearing a swastika, like Ralph Fiennes in *Schindler's List*. When you are wearing Calvin Klein and sitting down in a restaurant, it's more chilling."

ALAN WELLER



"I wanted to create a situation for actors that I'd never had," says Jason Patric of his new line of work

Patric did not, however, decide to produce LaBute's film merely in order to give himself a really meaty acting role. "There were lots of projects I could have made as vehicles for me, but I'm off that kind of stuff," he says. "I wanted to find something unique that would only get made if I pushed it. Then my company's head of development saw *In the Company of Men* at the Sundance Festival and thought it was one of the most interesting things there. I had a print flown out to Los Angeles, really liked it, asked Neil if he had any other scripts and he showed me *Your Friends & Neighbors*, which I found even more audacious than the first one.

"This all happened months before *Company* came out and got all those great reviews, so it was nice to feel I was at the cutting edge of something as opposed to jumping on a bandwagon."

As producer, Patric was very hands-on, involving himself in the choice of locations, cast and crew, the shooting and editing processes, even the design of the publicity posters. He was also able to make a film which looks a lot more expensive than the modest $4.3 million it actually cost by use of careful budgeting, shooting entirely on location and calling in favours from technical colleagues he had worked with in the past. One thing he refused to stint on, though, was time for the actors, both in terms of a generous rehearsal period and allowance for retakes if required.

"I wanted to create a situation for actors that I'd never had," he says. "With most movies there's no rehearsal. People learn lines the morning they shoot a scene. I don't think it works that way. The idea of spontaneity's a bunch of crap. It's the preparation that gives you freedom. This movie is as much about the silences and what happens in them as it is about the dialogue, and for the kind of acting that we needed, an intensive rehearsal period was essential."

Actors taking control of their professional lives by going into production is not a new phenomenon. Major stars, many of them women wanting perhaps to redress the male-biased power and money imbalance, have been doing it for years.

But actors as producers are also making an impact outside the major studio system on the lower-budget and creatively more exciting independent scene. Stanley Tucci has turned producer for *The Imposters*, his second film as writer/director, and *ER* star Anthony Edwards joined forces with fellow debut film producer Bill Kenwright for *Don't Go Breaking My Heart* (*also reviewed opposite*).

Patric has his own theory as to why the inmates are taking over the asylum. "Actors and others are finding that creatively Hollywood is now incredibly boring. But there's a lot of money to be made so nobody talks about it.

"Movies are a business and that's fine, but I felt I had a lot more to give than just showing up with my lines. I want to create the kind of movies that I care about and can be proud of."

At heart, it's no laughing matter

NEW MOVIES: Roberto Benigni's concentration camp comedy *Life is Beautiful* is clever, witty — and nauseating, says **James Christopher**

Some things are impossible to get away with in the cinema: snuff movies and the glory years of Partick Thistle FC spring to mind. But a comedy about the Holocaust? With $90 million of foreign box office in its pocket and a sackful of gongs — including the Best Jewish Experience Award at the Jerusalem International Film Festival and a host of Oscar nominations (*see panel, below right*) — Roberto Benigni's **Life is Beautiful** (*La Vita è Bella*) appears to have done just that.

At the centre of Benigni's fable — written, directed by and starring himself — is a clown, Guido, who has a way with cars that makes Chaplin or Keaton look like driving instructors. For the first 50 minutes after arriving in the Tuscan town of Arezzo, circa 1939, Guido's life is one long, wonderful series of slapstick accidents that work romantic miracles in his favour. With his goofy face, rubbery Italian wit and even more rubbery physical skills, Benigni is a charming one-man blizzard of gags involving eggs, hats and flower pots. He charms a local school teacher (Nicoletta Braschi), the fiancée of the Fascist town clerk, and then sweeps her off on horseback during her posh engagement dinner. So far, so frothy.

We fast forward to the last year of the war, and the film suddenly lurches from a comedy about love into a comedy about survival. Guido and the teacher are married. They have a five-year-old son, Joshua, and the Nazis are carting Jews off to concentration camps. Guido and Joshua are duly arrested, and Braschi, although not Jewish, duly follows.

Masking his fears, Benigni's Guido pretends that the death camp is a light-hearted game. If Joshua stays out of sight of Nazi soldiers, they will amass enough points to win their very own tank. Magic surrealism is replaced by a surreal lie. And Guido's efforts to maintain that lie become as tortuously ridiculous as Joshua's luck in not being discovered. Guido jollies his son through the filth and degradation. He gets a job in the officer's mess and plays romantic music to his wife across the compound. Everywhere, the grim reality is thwarted by Guido's dazzling *chutzpah*.

Benigni's eloquently put point is that imagination can conquer any horror. It is genuinely conceivable that people survived concentration camps by denying what was happening to them, or that they made up alternative, even more ludicrous, realities to stop themselves going insane. But to regard laughter as a cure-all seems as appropriate here as juggling decapitated heads at the scene of a motorway pile-up. The real problem with Benigni's inclusion of the Holocaust is that it never convinces for a second that it is anything more than a dramatic device — a tool to unlock a sentimental melodrama of family values. The film is undeniably moving, and beautifully shot. But it is also undeniably, and nauseatingly, manipulative.

Neil LaBute's comedy of manners, **Your Friends & Neighbors**, is no less manipulative than Benigni's fable. But the ugly truths on sale here are cleverly distilled from the sexual anxieties of six yuppie thirtysomethings, and then injected back into their lives like some kind of truth drug.

Two ghastly, well-heeled couples chip away at each other during a dinner party, and then give their partners hell in bed. Aaron Eckhart's fat Barry can't pleasure his wife, Mary (Amy Brenneman) so he pleasures himself. Ben Stiller's drama teacher, Jerry — an unholy blend of Woody Allen and Tom Cruise — is too noisy for his wife, Terri, and too neurotic to carry off an affair. The fabulously bored Terri (Catherine Keener) meets a gallery assistant (Nastassja Kinski) and promptly falls into bed with her. And Jason Patric's loose cannon, Cary, is the Norman Bates of misogyny.

It's a merry-go-round of nasty clashes in bookshops, restaurants, steam-rooms and bedrooms. They obsess about their limp sex-lives and needle each other for their most lurid sexual experiences. They behave very badly indeed, but they are as oddly sympathetic as they are despicably selfish. They are, after all, our friends and neighbours.

Like his uncompromising first feature, *In the Company of Men*, LaBute's film is intensely theatrical. The icing is the toothy close-ups, the unscrupulous outing of secrets, and the thinly disguised fact that they need each others' insecurities as much as they hate each other for them. Cynical? Sure. But it knocks the stuffing out of Ally McBeal.

For similar reasons you can see why Quentin Tarantino is in awe of Jack Hill and his 1975 flick, **Switchblade Sisters**. Pulpier than *Pulp Fiction*, swaggeringly trashy and shamelessly clichéd, the film cultivates an almost Victorian fear of acne-clad juvenile delinquents. Here a gang of suspiciously old-looking teenage girls — all studs, eyepatches and sullen stares — terrorises the hopeless police and God-fearing owners of greasy burger joints. There are ludicrous machine-gun shootouts and a power struggle about who is mean enough to be No 1. It's one of those films that is so bad it's embarrassing, and so embarrassing that it's hilarious. The joy is never knowing how far Hill has his tongue in his cheek. You couldn't hope to get away with this hysterical bad taste in 1999. And for that, I guess, we should be grateful.

The Valentine groove is Willi Patterson's **Don't Go Breaking My Heart**. It's not great, but it's lovely. Shot around the nooks and crannies of Hampstead, the film plots a quirky romance between Jenny Seagrove's beautifully preserved single mum and *ER* heart-throb Anthony Edwards. The fly in the ointment is Charles Dance's lecherous dentist. Using hypnosis rather than painkillers, the smooth-talking tooth-puller plants all sorts of suggestions in Seagrove's head to get her into bed, which backfire.

Seagrove not only makes a fantastic but endearing fool of herself, but holds the film together too. Glacially beautiful, comically confused, she blunders from one date to the next not knowing what might pop out of her mouth. That it all ends in cheery tears makes one peculiarly grateful.

Despite the presence of Michael Keaton, **Jack Frost** has the commercial lifespan of a snowball in the desert. Keaton dies in a car accident on Christmas Eve and comes back to life as a snowman to spend some quality time with his son. "Why me? Why like this?" wails the lumpy-faced snowman, drifting about his family's front yard as if there's a hovercraft in his undercarriage. Glenn Hoddle would put it down to bad karma. Others would be less charitable.

From one huge flake to another. In Michael Lehmann's **My Giant**, a seedy talent scout (Billy Crystal) crashes his car in Romania and is saved by the 7ft 6in Max (Gheorghe Muresan). Big-hearted Max hails from a monastery stuck in the Middle Ages. The diminutive sleazeball hails from an armpit in Los Angeles. There's no real contest. The payoff is that Crystal will reunite Max with a long-lost childhood sweetheart in exchange for a string of ultra-bad movie parts. Humiliation doesn't come much uglier than this.

Fifty years have not dimmed Marcel Carné's 1938 classic, **Hôtel du Nord**. Rarely has the desire for death seemed so everyday and yet so poetically eloquent. A pair of dapper young lovers check into a hotel intent on committing suicide. Waking up in hospital, Annabella discovers her lover has done a runner. It's the cynical, hard-bitten rogues next door who steal the film, though. Louis Jouvet, a pricelessly unaffected actor, and Arletty, a tart with rusty heart, are wittily seduced by the purity of the death wish. Valentines may find the pessimism of Jacques Prévert's script too existential for comfort. I find it turns an honest key. The prewar fatalism is at wonderful odds with the smoky atmosphere of Alexandre Trauner's brilliant studio sets: the shabby hotel, the inky canal. Paris has rarely seemed so dowdy.

Life is Beautiful
UCI Whiteleys
PG, 116 mins
Romantic fable stitches a disturbing comedy into the Holocaust

Your Friends & Neighbors
Virgin Haymarket
18, 100 mins
Withering, sex-obsessed comedy of manners

Switchblade Sisters
ABC Piccadilly
18, 90 mins
Re-release of cult film about teenage delinquents

Don't Go Breaking My Heart
ABC Shaftesbury Ave
PG, 93 mins
Quirky Valentine comedy

Jack Frost
Warner Village West End, PG, 102 mins
Michael Keaton comes to life as a snowman

My Giant
Local venues only
PG, 104 mins
Sleazy agent Billy Crystal discovers a Romanian giant

Hôtel Du Nord
ABC Swiss Centre
PG, 110 mins
Marcel Carné's bitter-sweet 1938 classic

Guido the clown (Roberto Benigni) in *Life is Beautiful*: "To regard laughter as a cure-all for horror seems as appropriate here as juggling decapitated heads at the scene of a motorway pile-up"



Oddly sympathetic as well as despicably selfish: the bed-hopping thirtysomethings of *Friends & Neighbors*

LINKS

WEBSITE:
Life is Beautiful: www.miramax.com
Jack Frost: www.wb-jackfrost.com
My Giant: www.warnerbros.com

TELEVISION:
Barry Norman's Film Night: Sky Premier, Sunday 9pm, Monday 3.30pm, Wednesday 7.30pm

RADIO:
Talking Pictures: Radio 4, Saturday 5.30pm

THE MAIN OSCAR NOMINATIONS

BEST PICTURE: *Elizabeth, Life is Beautiful, Saving Private Ryan, Shakespeare in Love, The Thin Red Line.*
ACTOR: Roberto Benigni, *Life is Beautiful*; Tom Hanks, *Saving Private Ryan*; Ian McKellen, *Gods and Monsters*; Nick Nolte, *Affliction*; Edward Norton, *American History X*.
ACTRESS: Cate Blanchett, *Elizabeth*; Fernanda Montenegro, *Central Station*; Gwyneth Paltrow, *Shakespeare in Love*; Meryl Streep, *One True Thing*; Emily Watson, *Hilary and Jackie*.
SUPPORTING ACTOR: James Coburn, *Affliction*; Robert Duvall, *A Civil Action*; Ed Harris, *The Truman Show*; Geoffrey Rush, *Shakespeare in Love*; Billy Bob Thornton, *A Simple Plan*.
SUPPORTING ACTRESS: Kathy Bates, *Primary Colors*; Brenda Blethyn, *Little Voice*; Judi Dench, *Shakespeare in Love*; Rachel Griffiths, *Hilary and Jackie*; Lynn Redgrave, *Gods and Monsters*.
DIRECTOR: Roberto Benigni, *Life is Beautiful*; Steven Spielberg, *Saving Private Ryan*; John Madden, *Shakespeare in Love*; Terrence Malick, *The Thin Red Line*; Peter Weir, *The Truman Show*.
FOREIGN FILM: *Central Station* (Brazil); *Children of Heaven* (Iran); *The Grandfather* (Spain); *Life Is Beautiful* (Italy); *Tango* (Argentina).
ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY: Warren Beatty and Jeremy Pikser, *Bulworth*; Vincenzo Cerami and Roberto Benigni, *Life is Beautiful*; Robert Rodat, *Saving Private Ryan*; Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard, *Shakespeare in Love*; Andrew Niccol, *The Truman Show*.
CINEMATOGRAPHY: *A Civil Action, Elizabeth, Saving Private Ryan, Shakespeare in Love, The Thin Red Line.*
ORIGINAL SONG: *I Don't Want to Miss a Thing* from *Armageddon* (Diane Warren); *The Prayer* from *Quest For Camelot* (Carole Bayer Sager, David Foster, Tony Renis, Alberto Testa); *A Soft Place to Fall* from *The Horse Whisperer* (Allison Moorer and Gwil Owen); *That'll Do* from *Babe: Pig in the City* (Randy Newman); *When You Believe* from *The Prince Of Egypt* (Stephen Schwartz).

Wham, bam, thank you, Bruce

■ **ARMAGEDDON**
Buena Vista, 12, 1998
IF THE world had to be saved from destruction by a hurtling asteroid, would you send up Bruce Willis and a surly team of former convicts, testosterone specials and jokers? This thundering blockbuster does, and turns the prospect of the world's imminent annihilation into a great excuse for a souped-up video game. You can rent the film now on video, or buy it on DVD; the latter format gives you marvellous sound and a dazzlingly crisp image, especially so when clouds, fire and debris swirl around, although you do have to flip over the disc half way through to see if Bruce and his merry crew actually do save mankind as we know it.

NEW VIDEO RELEASES

■ **THE AVENGERS**
Warner, 12, 1998
AFTER all the kerfuffle kicked up by its sneaky cinema debut behind critics' backs, now is the time to re-evaluate this updated revamp of the cult TV series. Unfortunately, nothing much has changed. The two leads, Ralph Fiennes and Uma Thurman, are still charmless, the script still feeble, and Sean Connery still wastes our time and his as the arch villain, trying to bring the world to its knees by mucking about with the weather. Renting the film for home viewing, though, is a painless and cheap way to find out what the fuss was about.

■ **CRYSTAL VOYAGER**
Blue Dolphin, E, 1974
YOU could categorise this period piece as a poetic documentary about surfing. For the most part it is awkwardly put together by surfer/director George Greenough, but the final 25 minutes turn up trumps with what we used to call a "mind-blowing" visual sequence, synchronised to Pink Floyd's *Echoes*. Equipped with a specially developed boat and camera lens, Greenough sails right through the innards of rolling waves — a hypnotic spectacle, but not one for the seasick.

■ **DIARY OF A CHAMBERMAID**
4 Front, 15, 1945
SHELTERING in Hollywood during the Second World War, the great Jean Renoir revisited his homeland in this fascinating, pixillated version of Octave Mirbeau's novel about a grasping chambermaid (later filmed in the 1960s by Luis Buñuel, with Jeanne Moreau). Through a nervous oscillation between burlesque and tragedy, Renoir exposes the disruptive forces within French society, and gives his performers a field day. Paulette Goddard's brashness, Hurd Hatfield's languorous good looks, Burgess Meredith's streak of whimsy: all are admirably deployed.

■ **METROLAND**
Fox Pathé, 18, 1998
THAT déjà vu feeling steals over you as Philip Saville's adaptation of Julian Barnes's first novel chugs along. It's the late 1970s, give or take several flashbacks, and the staid suburban lives of Christian Bale and Emily Watson get a shake-up with the arrival of Bale's boyhood friend (Lee Ross), who shared a dream that they would never turn bourgeois. Decent enough performances; but the cramped, literary feel does not generate the most exciting cinema — something that will matter less when viewed on a TV screen, the film's natural home.

GEOFF BROWN



■ LISTINGS

Mojo staged in Sheffield

ARTS

■ THEATRE

Mostly Fascinating Aida

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

THE RIOT: Co-production with Kneehigh Theatre of Cornwall. In Nick Darke's new play, set at the turn of the century, the army is brought in to quell the rivalry between two towns.
Cottesloe (0171-452 3000). Opens tonight, 7pm

VIENNA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: Not quite the Philharmonic but a very good orchestra, the Vienna SO under Vladimir Fedoseyev pays London a welcome visits. A popular programme comprises Johann Strauss's Tales from the Vienna Woods, Mozart's Piano Concerto in D, K 466, and Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. Artur Pizarro is the piano soloist.
Barbican (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm

ROYAL GALA CONCERT: International stars James Galway, Marisa Robles and Barbara Hendricks join the London Mozart Players under Matthias Bamert in a celebration of the chamber orchestra's 50th anniversary. Receiving its premiere in an otherwise all-Mozart programme is John Woolrich's Concerto for Orchestra, an anniversary commission.
Festival Hall (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7pm.

HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY: Off-Broadway hit comedy about putting on a musical revue, emphasis on lavish costumes and difficult performers.
Arts Theatre (0171-836 3334). Previews from tonight, 8pm. Opens Mon.

DIALOGUES DES CARMELITES: Trinity College of Music pays its centenary tribute to Poulenc with a staging of the French composer's serene work of martyrdom and hope. The conductor is Andrea Quinn. Kresimir Dolencic directs.
Spitalfields Market Opera, E1 (0171-377 1362). Opens tonight, 7.30pm

ELSEWHERE

LANCASTER: The noted mezzo Amanda Roocroft gives a recital featuring Lieder by Schumann and Wolf followed by songs by Debussy. With Malcolm Martineau, piano.
Lancaster University (01524 593729). Tonight, 7.30pm.

SHEFFIELD: Mojo is Jez Butterworth's rivetingly wicked and witty take on 1958 Soho gangland, where rock'n'roll fuels deadly rivalry. Deborah Paige directs.
Crucible (0114 2769922). Opens tonight, 8pm

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

■ **BAREFACED CHIC.** Fascinating Aida play here for a month before setting off on their latest national tour. This time Clarke Peters directs. See review, right.
Theatre Royal (0171-930 8800).

□ **THE RAPE OF LUCRECE:** Thrilling staging of Shakespeare's poem by Theresa Shiban's Angelus Arts. A company of seven plus sensationally exotic music.
Union Theatre, SE1 (0171-261 9876).

□ **SARA.** Patrick Miles's treatment of Chekhov's Ivanov, focusing on the struggles of the hero's Jewish wife.
Bridewell (0171-936 3456).

■ **COPENHAGEN:** Heisenberg mysteriously calls on Niels Bohr in wartime Denmark. Michael Frayn's intelligent play transfers to the West End. Michael Blakemore directs.
Duchess (0171-494 5075).

□ **TALK OF THE CITY:** Stephen Poliakoff's potentially fascinating play about BBC censorship in the 1930s. With David Westhead and a charismatic Angus Wright.
Young Vic (0171-928 6363).

□ **VASSA:** Sheila Hancock heads a terrific cast, playing the family matriarch in Gorky's strong drama. Howard Davies directs a new version for the Almeida season.
Albery (0171-369 1730).

◪ **RICHARD III:** Robert Lindsay puts on the hump for Elijah Moshinsky's RSC transfer from Stratford.
Savoy (0171-836 8888).

□ **BAD WEATHER:** Robert Holman's discursive play where a French nanny (Susan Engel) resolves some problems in a Middlesbrough tower block. Odd yet haunting.
Pit (0171-638 8891).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

HIDEOUS KINKY (15): Kate Winslet plays a naive young mother who takes her two young daughters on the hippie trail to Morocco in the early 1970s. Beautifully shot film with Saïd Taghmaoui, Bella Riza, Carrie Mullan.

LIVING OUT LOUD (15): Fitful romance with Holly Hunter and Danny DeVito as an odd couple who meet in the elevator. Cracking performances fail to unlock the stalemate. Director, Richard LaGravenese.

HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK (15): Successful career woman Angela Bassett falls for a Jamaican toy boy (Taye Diggs), half her age. Glorifying, indulgent holiday brochure from director Kevin Rodney Sullivan.

A BUGS LIFE (U): A colony of cute hard-working ants are terrorised by a delinquent gang of grasshoppers. Dazzling, bug-eyed perspectives from Disney and Pixar. John Lasseter directs.

PECKER (15): John Waters's frothy satire on the art world lacks his usual bite but there are enough bad-taste moments to keep the humour bubbling. With Edward Furlong and Christina Ricci.

CURRENT

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15): Thrilling romantic comedy with a cracking script by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard. Gwyneth Paltrow excels as the Bard's cross-dressing muse. John Madden directs.

STEPMOM (12): Squelchy divorce movie with Julia Roberts as the hapless new woman in Ed Harris's life, and Susan Sarandon as the terminally ill ex. High Kleenex rating.

VERY BAD THINGS (18): Peter Berg's macabre comedy thriller satirises buddy movies and suburban lifestyles by chopping up half the cast. Demonic performances from Christian Slater and Cameron Diaz.

BULWORTH (18): Warren Beatty's disillusioned senator discovers a taste for telling ugly home truths. A shameless ego trip for Beatty, but a wonderful new comic spin on political manipulation and mendacity.



DONALD COOPER

Ian McKellen (Prospero), Paul Bhattacharjee (Ariel) and Claudie Blakley (Miranda)

Lively under the plastic

THEATRE
The Tempest
Leeds

When John Gielgud played Prospero, it was as if the balding Bard were making a graceful farewell to the stage. Ian McKellen, whom many regard as his natural successor, looks more like a blend of Ben Gunn and Worzel Gummidge: grey grizzle, weary pout, battered grey cardigan, tattered brown breeches above bare legs, yokel's hat, ancient brogues. You don't doubt that Prospero has spent 12 years marooned on an island, but you do also wonder why he hasn't used his magic to improve his standard of living.

So when McKellen entered with his splintered bamboo staff, smelly old book and squashed-doll fetishes, trudged past an antiquated sofa, and proceeded to ignite nightlights stuck on a ring of small rocks, I half-expected West Yorkshire Playhouse's *The Tempest* to be transformed into the forlorn fantasy of an ageing bum. I have seen that idea tried before, as I recall by John Woodvine and the English Shakespeare Company, and it did not work well. So it was a relief to find that Jude Kelly's production was more indebted to the conventions of rough theatre. The plastic sheeting everywhere on display was not part of a dream. We were supposed to imagine that it was a stormy sky, Prospero's robe, even the gorgeous gowns with which he tricks the fashion-conscious Stephano and Trinculo.

Since the impression is rather of the sort of macs old women wear on wet days at Blackpool, my imagination gibbed a bit at that, as it did at the plastic cocoons from the movie *Coma* or the film *Alien* in which Juno and her fellow-goddesses appear. But I must admit that the ugliness of it all did not greatly mar a lively evening. There are performers who, it's said, cannot act their way out of a paper bag. I can now report that there are also actors who can perform very nicely inside a plastic one, and that Sir Ian is one of them.

His performance is not yet the finished, thought-out, felt-out thing — it may take another, less eccentric production for him to achieve that — but it will more than do. This Prospero is as life-battered as he's weather-beaten, a wryly disillusioned old ironist who still feels anger at his foes but does not need Ariel to tell him he must show pity to them. He feels it deep inside when he says "our little life is rounded with a sleep". He means it when he declares that, after his return to what he insists on calling Mil*an* rather than the more Shakespearean *Mil*an, every third thought will be of his grave.

Kelly tries to correct the play's gender imbalance by casting women as the usurpers and villains, but it proves no great success, perhaps because they try too hard to be "male". Susie Baxter, for instance, is surely wrong to make Alonso an angry aristocratic bouncer rather than a father enclosed in grief because of the loss of Rhashan Stone's refreshingly sweet Ferdinand.

The low-lifers, with Will Keen a sad Ulster Trinculo, Willie Ross's Stephano an ultra-thin, swaying exclamation mark with a quiff of hair where the dot should be, and Timothy Walker a Caliban with vampire teeth but also a hint of the noble savage about him, come off better. But why, I wonder, do Walker, Paul Bhattacharjee's blue-skinned Ariel and the local spirits all wear a hat, cardie and togs identical to McKellen's? Well, I suppose cellophane-swathed isles would have quaint notions of chic.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Trips and trills

Barefaced Chic
Theatre Royal

I found myself liking this show less and less the longer I had to wait for it to begin. By the time the wannabe-celebs tore their fatuous selves away from the lobby and bars, and deigned to shuffle towards their seats, 25 minutes had gone by since the scheduled time for the start. If this had been an overnight review the second half would have got short shrift, and I felt in a mood to give the first half a shrift of similar brevity.

But this would have been unfair since the delays were not the fault of the Fascinating Aida trio. Behind the curtain they were probably tearing their hair — Dilly Keane's longish and blonde, Adèle Anderson's brunette, and Issy van Randwyck's blonde with a yellow flower on top. Ironically, the first view we had of the girls showed them making themselves up in front of pretend dressing-room mirrors, fine-tuning dance routines and breaking into song with half an hour to go before being due "on stage". They remained at their mirrors till the interval when, finally acknowledging the gathering panic in the voice of the tannoy, they rushed off for their opening number, ie, back to their actual dressing rooms, while we and the wannabes set off for the bars again.

Well, this made an interesting departure from their more familiar procedure, where Adèle and Issy would sing and prance about the place while Dilly parked herself at the piano and joined in from there. The contribution of Clarke Peters as director this time round shows itself in the nifty movement of the dances — between the dances too, when the girls switch position or go whirling and sliding around the stage.

The subjects of their songs — all the lyrics written by themselves and the music by Dilly — are much as usual: witty comments on the cultural scene, rueful observations on growing old. "Rows and rows/Of perfect men/ Heaven knows/That was then." Subjects include wannabe confessors on the Jerry Springer show, pick'n'mix New Ageists, new Labour, new drugs — Viagra today, tobacco yesterday. One good thing about them is they don't dumb down, so if you miss a reference, well, others won't and you may catch the next one. "Señor da Gama, known as Vasco/Has sold our hero some tabasco." Issy, like a china doll with a cheek-defying smile; Adèle lofty and likely to peer down her long nose; Dilly putting on the Miss Prim air or singing with a seethe in her heart — these are the characters they mostly turn to in their songs. Thus Issy emerges as a Monica, Adèle as Linda T with her finger on the tape-recorder, and Dilly? Let that stay as a surprise.

The Beetroot Song doesn't work, and one or two others tail away, like the beetroot's roots. The music relies comfortingly on Forties/Fifties styles, mostly light, but then from out of the jokes comes the hymn-like melody of *Flowers in Winter*, led by Issy's angelically pure soprano, and the heart melts.

JEREMY KINGSTON




Song birds: Issy van Randwyck, Adèle Anderson and Dilly Keane

■ OPERA
Making of a Parsifal

ARTS

■ CLASSICAL CDS
The Geisha revived

Kim's game of chances

OPERA: Hilary Finch charts the tenor Kim Begley's rise from panto to Parsifal

He's an *actor*, you know, a colleague whispered to me when I first spotted the tenor Kim Begley 15 or so years ago as a student at the National Opera Studio. And indeed he was. Long before his Achilles in *King Priam* and Cassio in *Otello* at Covent Garden, before his Janácek at Glyndebourne, before Lohengrin, Siegmund and, now, the title role in the new *Parsifal* which opens at English National Opera on Saturday, Kim Begley had trodden the boards as everyone's favourite White Rabbit, as Flute the bellows-mender at Stratford, and much more besides.

"It was all I ever wanted to be: at 18 I muscled my way into the wardrobe department of Chester's Gateway Theatre, got myself a place on the costume course at the Wimbledon School of Art, understudied and acted all over London, then spent two years with the Royal Shakespeare Company in the late 1970s. That was in the days of Trevor Nunn — when everything he touched turned to gold."

Including Begley. His next break was being spotted by Rudolf Piernay from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama while playing the villain in a *Robinson Crusoe* panto. He clearly heard the tenor potential within Begley's basso profundo, and told him about Arts Council bursaries for actors who wanted to be singers. Begley took a crash course in theory, piano and voice at the Guildhall and, within a year, Covent Garden had offered him a principal's contract on condition he study for a year at the National Opera Studio.

"I realised then that opera was the most perfect, the most complete form of theatre there was. And I was totally in awe of my colleagues. They were all younger than I was; but I couldn't read music and had no languages. I had to learn incredibly quickly. A lot of bluffing went on, I can tell you."

Six seasons and 30 roles later, Begley left the Royal Opera and began to work with Nikolaus Lehnhoff on Glyndebourne's great Janácek cycle. He had found his professional soul-mate. "Lehnhoff was the person who opened the international door for me." And through it lay Wagner. "He offered me Lohengrin in Frankfurt, and I went for it, because I could trust him." After that came Loge in Cologne and Milan, Siegmund at Covent Garden — and now Parsifal, again directed by Lehnhoff.

What's so special about working with Lehnhoff? "He comes to the first rehearsal with everything worked out in meticulous detail, like a film script. His method doesn't suit everyone. But it gives you such a secure foundation that you then have the freedom to develop your own performance. He works in a very visual way, focusing on your body language, on your relationship to everyone else on stage. And that, after all, is what hits an audience first."

> 'I couldn't read music and had no languages. I had to learn incredibly quickly'

So what of Begley's own performance? Parsifal is, after all, the Holy Grail of tenor roles. What is required of him is nothing less than the portrayal of an archetype of human spiritual experience: the long journey of the "innocent fool", the unknown boy from the forest whose mission is to heal the wound of the dying king Amfortas and, through acquiring the knowledge of guilt, responsibility and compassion, to restore the healing power of the Grail. The orphaned simpleton becomes the redeemer redeemed. How does Begley prepare himself?

"I don't prepare! It must be the actor in me. I just approach it with a blank sheet of paper. It all comes in rehearsal. Of course, the difference with opera is that the music doesn't give you that total freedom. I spend all my time simply learning how to sing the score. You hear two things about the role of Parsifal: that it's very low, and that it's very short. Well, it may be short — just 25 minutes in an evening of nearly six hours — but it's intensely concentrated. And Wagner wrote it very precisely for a tenor, and knew exactly what he was doing. The choice and placing of every word in every phrase counts."

How, then, does Begley feel about singing it in English? "Mark Elder, who is conducting, is of course a passionate advocate of it. But I had to be honest and say, from day one, that I feel it's too big a compromise. Richard Stokes's translation is a tremendous achievement, there's no doubt about that. But it's simply not possible to reproduce all the vowels, stresses and inflection so meticulously chosen by Wagner. And, in my personal view, with surtitles and with much better educated audiences, it's not necessary today, either."

So Begley returns to the score, close-focuses on Parsifal and his blissful ignorance. "Instant communication is essential. It's a long evening and people need to feel that raw energy: to see me wringing my hands, not analyse why I'm wringing them. The more you internalise, the less you communicate. And if you don't learn how to cope with the emotional force of the music in rehearsal, you're done for in performance. When I first listened to it, I just broke down every time. The sheer intensity of the music is disturbing enough. But then, to think you are going to *sing* it! That's a privilege which can simply never be over-estimated."

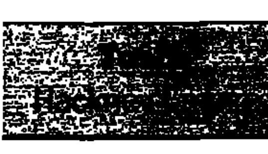
● Parsifal *opens at 4pm on Saturday at the Coliseum (0171-632 8300)*.

CLIVE BARDA



Fool's progress: Kim Begley sings Parsifal in Nikolaus Lehnhoff's new production for ENO

East on tour



WHAT'S in a name? This *Tosca* was originally billed as from the "Mussorgsky (former Maly) Theatre of St Petersburg", then as the "Chisinau National Opera", which — for the geographically challenged — turns out to be our old friends the Moldovan National Opera, plus guest soloists from the former Soviet Union.

These tours from the East, whizzing round the UK on mostly one-night stands, are a great mystery: how can they possibly make money? But make money they presumably do, and one profoundly hopes most of it goes to the artists.

The first act was rough and ready. No production (though this is seen as a selling-point), vestigial decor, everyone singing very loudly all the time.

Then things settled down. The conductor, Nicolae Dohotaru, knows how Puccini should go, and his modest-sized orchestra was more than willing; the tiny chorus produced a rousing sound.

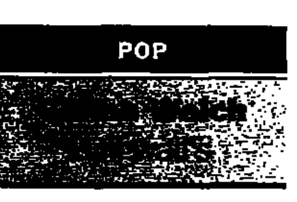
And there was good singing in intriguingly Russian-inflected Italian. A Cavaradossi, Aleksey Repchinsky, who can biff out a *Vittoria!* to pin you to your seat and then caress *O dolci mani* so swooningly is not to be sniffed at. Ludmila Magomedova (Tosca) has a secure dramatic soprano and an entrancing prima-donna stage manner. The Scarpia, Boris Materinco, was impossibly well-mannered, but his *legato* was properly Italianate.

There is also something very right about an opera performance sandwiched between Cannon and Ball and *Goodness Gracious Me* in the last London theatre with a genuine community audience. The fact that Matcham's masterpiece has been denied a lottery grant still makes me seethe, and with hindsight this is where the Royal Opera should have spent its exile. Then the audience would have heard even better opera.

RODNEY MILNES

Mournful magic

POP



GILLIAN WELCH ought to come sepia-tinted. Defiantly anti-urban, her two extraordinarily timeless albums reinforce the Depression-era image. She may come from Los Angeles but she couldn't sound more antiquely rustic if she had tumbled out of the Appalachians yesterday.

For nearly two hours, punctuated by a 40-minute interval, she played a compelling mix of keening laments and sombre murder ballads accompanied only by two deceptively simple acoustic guitars. The lack of any real change of pace could have sounded repetitious but somehow it never did and the reverential crowd gave the evening the air of an oldtime prayer meeting.

There was a remarkable modal quality to Welch's mournful voice, like a lived-in Joan Baez, while David Rawlings, who gave an exemplary display of finger-picking guitar styles, added a ghostly quality with his almost whispered counterpoint. Their own compositions were dark and powerful explorations of oldfashioned themes such as sin and redemption, with titles like *I'm Not Afraid to Die* and *The Devil Had a Hold of Me*.

On *My Morphine*, a tale of utter wretchedness, Welch let out a yodel that was quite possibly the most lonesome sound ever heard inside a concert venue. Like a howl, it seemed to come from a place beyond words. For her first encore she sang the semi-autobiographical *Orphan Girl*, which was also covered by Emmylou Harris. Called back twice more, she unfurled understated versions of *Jesus On The Mainline* and *Long Black Veil* during which you could have heard a pin drop.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: A *Butterfly* eight years early; and songs by a fine young German baritone

MUSICAL

■ **JONES**
The Geisha
Watson/Walker/Maltman/Koc/Suart/New London Light Orch/Corp
Hyperion CDA67006 ★★
£14.99

SIDNEY Jones got in first, beating Puccini by eight years. Naval encounters with Japanese ladies are the subject of both *Madama Butterfly* and *The Geisha*. There the similarities end. Jones's officers from the *HMS Turtle* are British to the core, excellently sung by Christopher Maltman and Jozic Koc, and after their dalliances they both do the right thing and return to their first loves.

Hyperion has done excellent service in resurrecting a musical which had a two-year run in London a century ago and is now virtually forgotten. Jones wrote brief, catchy numbers, scarcely ever exceeding the three-minute mark. The son of a bandmaster, he drew his inspiration as much from the ditties of the music hall as from G & S, who were still ruling the musical roost, not least with *The Mikado*.

Lilian Watson gives Mimosa, the geisha, all the fragrance the name demands. She is well matched by Sarah Walker, the girl who pulls her fiancé back on to the straight and narrow. To her go two comic songs, one about a monkey on a stick (which Jones did not write) and the other about a parrot, clearly a close relative of tit-willow. Richard Suart has the best of several gloriously non-PC numbers, including *Chin Chin Chinaman*. Jolly place, Jones's Japan.

JOHN HIGGINS

VOCAL

■ **BEETHOVEN**
Songs
Genz/Vignoles
Hyperion CDA 67055 ★★★
£14.99

AS WE have to wait until June for the young German baritone Stephan Genz to sing live in London, it's good to see this new release of Beethoven songs which arrives in time to join the celebrations of Goethe's 250th birthday this year.

The 26-year-old Genz is in the first bloom of his youthful prime; and Beethoven's setting of Goethe's *Mailied*, with its lightly breathed, springing words, could have been written with Genz himself in mind. Roger Vignoles is Genz's regular accompanist, and the two of them find an irresistible bounding energy for one of Beethoven's most spontaneous songs, *Neue Liebe, neues Leben*; and they have a good nibble at the wit of the flea-song *Aus Goethes Faust*.

This generous recital, which also includes six Gellert settings that look ahead to Brahms's *Four Serious Songs*, concludes with Genz's beautifully paced performance of Beethoven's pioneering song-cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, one song modulating exquisitely into another in Vignoles's piano playing.

HILARY FINCH

★ *Worth hearing*
★★ *Worth considering*
★★★ *Worth buying*

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

BOOKS

A vast monument to plain good sense

Novelist, essayist and satirist: Gore Vidal's versatility is a reader's delight, but an editor's nightmare



Erica Wagner

Harold Acton found him "aggressively handsome", as Gore Vidal characteristically notes in his memoir, *Palimpsest*, published in 1995. Acton was right; and Vidal is so even now, gliding into his eighth decade and peering coolly out at us from the burnished cover of this book. We only get the gaze of one eye — the other's iris is truncated by text — but it is no less penetrating for being Cyclopean. If it were not ungentlemanly to do so, and Vidal has always been a gentleman, he seems to be issuing a dare: "Argue with me if you can." He seems to know he'll come out on top.

Who is like Gore Vidal? Swift, perhaps; or Mark Twain, or Henry James. He is novelist, satirist, essayist, playwright, even — like Dickens — an actor. He was born at West Point: his grandfather was a senator from Tennessee, T. P. Gore, blind from the age of two and to whom his grandson would read by the hour. Amelia Earhart was his father's lover; Eleanor Roosevelt a family friend. He made his own ventures into politics. He seems to have known everyone; if we can't (quite) always believe what he says about them, well, that's just part of his mischievous charm. He is serious but never sententious, and — rare quality — unafraid to say what he thinks. There is no one quite like him, and if you do not know his work you should. So this fat anthology of Vidal's work — nearly 1,000 pages — poses the reviewer a problem.

Fred Kaplan is its doughty editor. Kaplan has written biographies of Dickens, James and Carlyle; he is now at work on still-very-much-with-us Vidal, with his subject's full co-operation. Kaplan, in trying to present "the essential" Vidal, has set himself a tough task. Vidal is nothing if not prolific: how to squeeze a dollop each of 23 novels, a collection of short stories, five plays and 12 works of non-fiction into a single book? The historical novels — *Burr*, *Lincoln*, *Hollywood* among them — are very different in tone from what he has called his "inventions", which include *Myra Breckenridge* and his latest novel, *The Smithsonian Institution*. The histories render the Vidalian vision of America's past; the inventions offer surreal satire on the present. There are the religious novels — one of which, *Live from Golgotha*, made Saints Paul and Timothy rather more than just good friends, televised the Crucifixion, and caused predictable outrage.

It is a sentiment that cannot be strange to Vidal. His novel *The City and the Pillar*, appearing in 1948 shortly before the Kinsey Report, was one of the first published in the mainstream to deal openly with male homosexuality — damned by many critics, it nevertheless became a bestseller. For some years afterwards, *The New York Times*, among others, refused to review his work. Yet he always prevailed — continued to live as a writer, which is all that counts. On top of all this he is a truly great essayist: authoritative, intimate but never casual, busy rocking the boat with every oar at his disposal. So how to encompass all this?

It can seem unfair to question an editor's choice of an author's work. Everything is not relative: but literature is still a matter of taste, and Kaplan cannot be blamed for deciding, say, that *Duluth* — an invention of 1983 that takes on fast-and-loose TV culture and narrative theory, among other things — is more worthy of inclusion here than 1954's *Messiah*, which in its creation of a cult of death is a chilling indictment of organised religion.

But space has forced Kaplan not only to choose but also to carve: with the exception of *Myra Breckenridge*, reproduced here in its full, uproarious splendour, we are given chunks of novels, and this is frustrating. It is, perhaps, a good thing for the Gore scholar to be able to read the old and new endings to *The City and the Pillar* — Vidal revised the book twice — side by side: but if you haven't read the book in the first place, why on earth would you want to read only the end?

This is not a problem where the essays are concerned, and Kaplan provides a good selection. What's marvellous about Vidal is the pleasant shiver of horrified anticipation that fills you upon seeing the title *Women's Liberation: Feminism and Its Discontents* — and then the discovery, or rediscovery, of his plain good sense. He is not a cynic: he writes movingly of the difficult, vital, Eleanor Roosevelt, of the world that seemed lost when she died in 1962 and he watched her coffin roll by: "From 1950 on, our story has been progressively more and more squalid. Nor can one say it is a lack of the good and great in high places: they are always there when needed. Rather the corruption of empire has etiolated the words themselves. Now we live in a society which none of us much likes, all would like to change, but no one knows how. Most ominous of all, there is now a sense that what has gone wrong for us may be irreversible... Whether or not one thought of Eleanor Roosevelt as a world ombudsman or as a chronic explainer or as a scourge of the selfish, she was like no one else in her usefulness. As the box containing her went past me, I thought, well, that's that. We're really on our own now."

So we are. We may be glad though, that Gore Vidal is with us still. But if you have never read his work, save your £25. Go to the library, or buy his novels and essays in paperback. Read him whole, and think for yourself as he would have you do.

THE ESSENTIAL GORE VIDAL
Edited by Fred Kaplan
Little, Brown, £25
ISBN 0 316 84806 9

In short

The bard of the big screen

THE TESTAMENT
By John Grisham
Century, £16.99
ISBN 0 7126 7826 3

ONE day some postgraduate with time, money and little sense of how to utilise either, will write a thesis entitled *Allusions to* King Lear *in the work of John Grisham*. In Grisham's latest thriller, *The Testament*, a self-made billionaire called Troy Phelan is wheelchair-bound. Increasingly reclusive, he is living to die, while his children are metaphorically tugging at his beard and waiting to get their paws on his assets. Sounds familiar? Of course the likeness between Grisham and Shakespeare does not stop there. Both are the current darlings of Hollywood and this infuriatingly addictive tale has blockbuster scrawled all over it.

A last word

PURE DRIVEL
By Steve Martin
Penguin, £9.99
ISBN 0 670 88521 5

MANY of these "after-dinner mints to the big meal of literature" are reminiscences and fragments of scripts published by Tina Brown in *The New Yorker*. Martin, better known for his goofy roles in *Roxanne* and *Father of the Bride* than for his television writing and stage-plays, gently teases with musings such as *Lolita at Fifty* and *The Paparazzi of Plato*. The rogue interviewer Dennis Pennis once asked Martin: "Heh Steve, why aren't you funny any more?" Almost two years after the awkward silence that followed that very public poking, this may be Martin's winning retort.

Small detail

TAKING DOREEN OUT OF THE SKY STORIES
By Alan Beard
Picador, £6.99
ISBN 0 330 37192 4

ALAN BEARD has produced a collection of stories set in the West Midlands that touches and tickles. But it is not always the main characters that enchant in his stories of ordinary and extraordinary lives. In the title tale about the closing of a steelworks in Birmingham, it is the faces we see as we look over the narrator's shoulders that are most affecting: "Through the leafless branches of a street tree I noticed this man drag something out of a house. It turned out to be a woman, she was kicking, he pulled." Beard revels in the details of working-class life and manages to slip in important contemporary reference points — the "socials", the Bull Ring Centre and Fat Willy anoraks — without being preachy, heavy-handed or self-consciously populist.

ALEX O'CONNELL

Monster of the seabed

Just when you thought it was safe: David Bellamy finds a 60 ft squid

THE SEARCH FOR THE GIANT SQUID
By Richard Ellis
Robert Hale, £25
ISBN 0 7090 6433 0



Britain may once have ruled the waves but at the height of her power, when the great *Challenger* expedition first plumbed the depths of the world's oceans, evidence continued to accrue that a monster mollusc was the true master of the deep. One hundred years on — during which time sonar and other detection devices have allowed us to rape the womb of Mother Earth, sending the cetaceans, turtles and many fisheries to the brink of extinction — no one has ever seen *Architeuthis*, the monster of the deep, alive, and lived to tell the tale... or have they?

Mystery or imagination, what are the facts about the giant squid? Well there is no need to hold your breath any longer, except perhaps when walking on the beach, for all the information is in this fascinating book.

Giant squids up to 60 ft long (and possibly over four times that length) exist in all the oceans of the world. You may be lucky and find a carcass rotting on the beach — if so be sure to photograph it and inform the local university. How many people have been snatched to a fate worse than death? We shall never know. The good news is that such devourings seem unlikely, for the guts of all the giants found on the strand to date have been devoid of identifiable remains. What is more, as the stranded males are often ripe with sperm packs, the theory goes that they only venture into the shallows to find a mate and they do this *sans* wedding breakfast. Although both sexes can glow with an eerie phosphorescence, it could be that despite their dinner-plate eyes they cannot locate a partner in the inky depths. There is also some evidence that like lesser squids, the giants swim in shoals, an awesome thought.

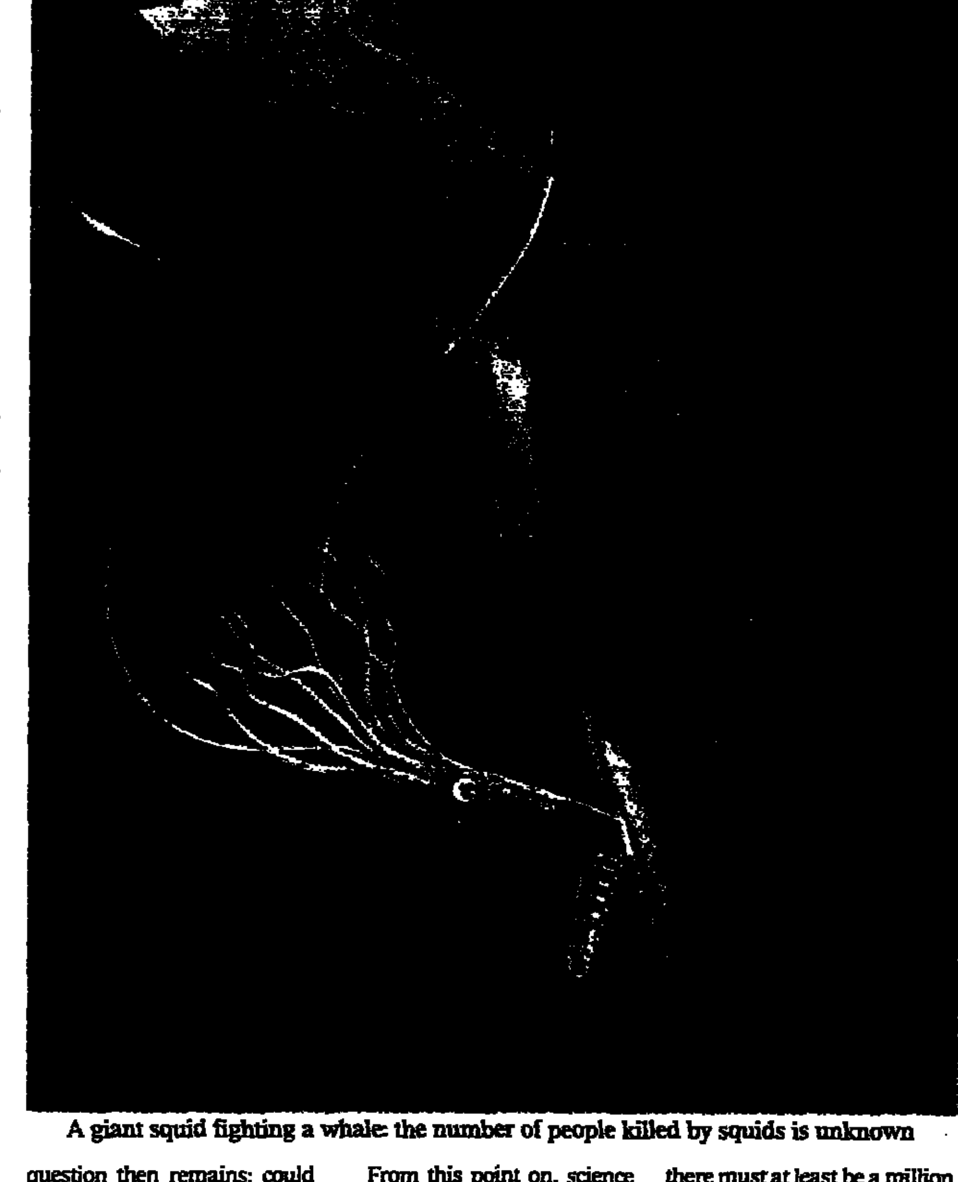
Giant squids certainly fight sperm whales, but so would you if you were being eaten. However, the whales appear always to make rings out of the monster calamaries. The question then remains: could the air-breathing cetacean ever be held down for the count by the master predator of the deep — who has no need to surface for a breath of air?

Dying whales have regurgitated chunks of *Architeuthis* (perhaps the only enlightening information that ever came from whaling, commercial or scientific) and an incredible 28,000 squid beaks were found in the stomach of one whale.

From this point on, science fact merges with fiction. It is estimated that before whaling took its toll there were about 10 million tonnes of sperm whales living in the oceans. To sustain this voracious army would take an annual catch of 100 million tonnes of squid — an amount greater than the weight of the whole human race. If, as research shows, only 0.26 per cent of these are *Architeuthis* it still means there must at least be a million of these monsters swimming.

Perhaps it's time to make a sequel to *Jaws* — the film which gave sharks such a bad name. *Beaks* could begin with the same young lady fresh from sex on the beach in the grips of an amorous squid, so living to tell the tale and film it for posterity. When it comes to giant squids fact may be stranger than fiction. Read all about it.

RICHARD ELLIS

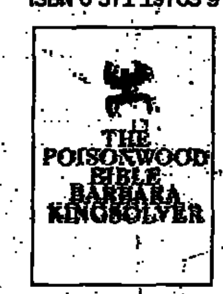


A giant squid fighting a whale: the number of people killed by squids is unknown

Live by the book, die by the gun

CLAIRE MESSUD

THE POISONWOOD BIBLE
By Barbara Kingsolver
Faber, £10.99
ISBN 0 571 19763 9



"I spent nearly 30 years waiting for the wisdom and maturity to write this book," Barbara Kingsolver announces in a note to her new novel, *The Poisonwood Bible*.

Set largely in 1959-60 in the Belgian Congo, the novel bears evidence of the author's seriousness of intent: more than 500 pages long, with a bibliography, a wealth of Kikongo vocabulary, biblical resonances, a 30-year narrative span and five narrators, *The Poisonwood Bible* is a tome of significant ambition.

This said, Kingsolver is a bestselling novelist rather than an academician, and of daunting material she has wrought a rich, readable saga about the Price family, American evangelicals on a mission to spread Christ's word in Africa.

Nathan Price, pastor and patriarch, is the only family member denied a voice in Kingsolver's book — which is just as well, as he is a fire and brimstone tyrant, contemptuous of his family and patronising to the heathens among whom they settle. Orleanna, his long-suffering spouse, is given several retrospective monologues; but the bulk of the book belongs to their daughters: Rachel, Leah and Adah, and little Ruth May.

Rachel, almost 16 as the story begins, is an all-American blonde, preoccupied with lipsticks and popularity and prone to a cartoonish stream of malapropisms. Leah and Adah are twins: the former, initially her father's sole defender, is an earnest seeker for justice, and as such will ally herself with the Congolese in the face of Western imperialist evils; and the latter, crippled by an accident in the womb, is a voluntary mute, an embittered but brilliant loner who lives in a realm of private palindromes. Their littlest sister, Ruth May, at only five is the best able to adapt to their new society and yet is more readily harmed by it also.

The trials that confront the Prices worsen when the family stay on after Congo's independence in June, 1960. In the end, the family pay a terrible price for their missionary will — and yet, as Kingsolver makes clear, it is no greater a price than that paid by many Congolese families.

The Poisonwood Bible is an engrossing novel and an interesting one — not least because Kingsolver is adept at interweaving the Prices' individual traumas and the broader political intrigues of the time — but it is not an especially sophisticated literary undertaking. Kingsolver's characters are too easily divided into the good and the bad, and their political discussions tend to be didactic and undigested. The lyrical passages are also often cloying and unconvincing.

But when the novel strives least for effect, it is both provocative and affecting, a globalised, post-colonial *Little Women*, which illustrates how profoundly both women, and the world, have changed.

A gamble that doesn't pay off

TWELVE GRAND
The Gambler as Hero
By Jonathan Rendall
Yellow Jersey Press, £10
ISBN 0 224 05149 0



Someone, somewhere has decided that Jonathan Rendall is a hot property. His first novel, *This Bloody Mary Is The Last Thing I Own*, won the Somerset Maugham Prize. For his second, at the age of 35, he has been accorded some unusual publishing privileges.

His very own imprint, for a start, which turns out to be a wholly-owned subsidiary of Random House. Yellow Jersey Press also has a role to play in Rendall's novel, in which one of its editors offers him a £12,000 advance to gamble the lot and write a book about it.

It's not an original idea — for all the cutesy jacket blurb, attempting to blur the lines between fact and fiction. "In August 1997 Jonathan Rendall was given £12,000 to gamble. It is not clear whether he gambled the whole amount, though he insists he did... Here then is his story, whether true or false."

While reading it, I noticed a profile by Rendall in one of the Sunday magazines of the snooker-player Jimmy White, who makes several cameo appearances in the novel. More blurring. Are we to assume Rendall is himself as determinedly dissolute, and self-destructively alcoholic as the journalist-novelist he plays in his own story?

To be frank, we don't much care. He stumbles through his own pages in a haze of booze, drugs and blotto-dom, doubly alienating when this reduces him to continuing his narrative in note form while idly wondering whether to nick the boodle and cheat Yellow Jersey out of its book. Not easy to read, stuff like that — or as he wld wrt, stff lk tht.

TONY HOLDEN

Heroes at the heart of the enemy

GERALD JACOBS

FOLEY
The Spy Who Saved 10,000 Jews
By Michael Smith
Hodder & Stoughton, £20
ISBN 0 340 71850 1

THE GOOD GERMAN OF NANKING
The Diaries of John Rabe
Edited by Erwin Wickert
Little, Brown, £18.99
ISBN 0 316 64807 8

In the six years since Steven Spielberg's transformation of Oskar Schindler, courtesy of Thomas Keneally, into a household name, there has been a steady trickle of similar tales of individual moral courage during the dark days of the 1930s and 1940s. Each one, when properly authenticated, offers a welcome corrective to the despair prompted by any sustained consideration of the actions of the perpetrators of this century's barbarism and the inaction of those who stood by or turned away.

Frank Foley and John Rabe are certainly the kinds of men whose efforts on behalf of the wretched and oppressed need to be more widely known. Foley was a British spy, a member of MI6, based in Germany in the 1930s, whose eyes were quickly opened to the growing anti-Semitism around him in Berlin. During the same period, John Rabe, a German employee of Siemens electrical company long based in Nanking, then capital of China, bore witness to the atrocities committed by members of the invading Japanese Army.

Frank Foley's study is written by Michael Smith in a crisp, informative manner. He provides a concise account of the historical events building into war and very effectively conveys the atmosphere of cumulative danger experienced by Jews in Germany under the Nazis. Smith mostly allows the dramatic facts to speak for themselves.

Foley's cover in Berlin for his spying activities was a post as passport control officer attached to the British Consulate. It was in this capacity that he strove to evade regulations to issue thousands of Jews with visas for Palestine as well as helping to provide false documentation and access to escape routes out of the Reich for further thousands who otherwise would undoubtedly have perished.

A steadfast soul with a passion for gardening, Foley led a life of improbable colour and danger. He became a key intelligence officer and Smith relates a number of intriguing episodes in which, for example, Foley organised a rescue operation with James Bond's creator, Ian Fleming, and later played a part in the interrogation of Rudolf Hess.

Foley often found himself up against the bungling coldness of the British authorities as well as the vicious coldness of the Germans. Tellingly, his wife wrote of her neighbours as among the latter: "They hate this business as much as we do, but none of them has the guts to stand against it but all submit like sheep. Few are Nazis at heart."

If John Rabe wasn't really "a Nazi at heart", he started out believing himself to be, signing up for the party and, as the deprivations of his Chinese neighbours began to weigh upon him, constantly expressing his hope in Hitler in his diaries, edited here by Erwin Wickert and translated by John F. Woods.

Although his employers offered him the chance of escape, Rabe decided to stick to his post, not for professional motives but for humanitarian ones. A dapper, diabetic, energetic Christian, he set up a committee of Western residents of Nanking with the task of enforcing a safety zone for Chinese civilians in the face of a brutal, vengeful assault by the Japanese. The diary records the growing tribulations he and his colleagues faced and the bitter treatment of the inhabitants of Nanking by marauding Japanese soldiers. The widespread violation of women and girls and the wanton murder of adults and children is, for him, "destruction barbaric beyond all comprehension".

The outrage expressed by Rabe and other Germans in China is of course heavy with irony, given the events about to unfold "at home". Eventually Rabe's eyes are opened to this, too, and there is a short section included of his German diary dealing with the last days of the war and its immediate aftermath when Rabe and his family are suffering their own hardships and indignities.

Having witnessed the bestiality of the Japanese, Germans, Russians and indeed the Chinese, in contrasting theatres of war, the selfless John Rabe had a rare exposure to the more disturbing patterns of human behaviour. His story is a significant document.

BOOKS

Sounds like a spiritual awakening

Music theory was influential in ancient cosmology and theology — **Roger Scruton** discovers a time when the strum of a lyre really did make the world go round

MUSIC IN ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME
By J. G. Landels
Routledge, £50
ISBN 0 415 16776 0



The term "music" comes to us from ancient Greek and commemorates the goddesses (Muses) who presided over the arts. Singing, dancing and the playing of musical instruments were not just pastimes for the Greeks: they were integral parts of the public and religious life of the city. Music was the cornerstone of education; for the Pythagoreans it was also the key to the universe. Music was the principle theme of philosophy, with Plato arguing powerfully against the rock bands of his day.

The Athenian theatre was also a musical event, with a precisely annotated score. And no party was complete without the aulos, the lyre or the kithara. In the literature of ancient Greece we glimpse a society so permeated by music that almost every action — from a gymnastic contest to a trial by jury, from a symposium to a military skirmish — seems to be shaped by the laws of harmony. And the musical ideas of Greece have been handed down to us in words which have no Saxon equivalent: "rhythm", "harmony" and "melody", which says so much more than "tune".

But how much do we actually know about ancient music? Until recently not much. We knew the names of instruments and could reconstruct them in outline from the ceramic illustrations. We knew the names of the modes and even of the notes. We also knew some of the theory — both the theory of the tetrachord (from which the Greek scales were constructed), and the cosmology which was supposed to explain it. Indeed this cosmology — due to the Pythagoreans, but wonderfully embellished by Plato in the *Timaeus* — has been the most influential theory in the history of the world, since it gave us the cosmology, the theology and the vision of human nature which prevailed from antiquity to the Renaissance.

Still we did not really know much about ancient music — about its melodic or rhythmical organisation, about the timbre of its instruments, about the role of the accompaniment, or about the fitting together of music and words. Classical scholars have recently been putting the pieces together. The most learned of them, M. L. West, in his *Ancient Greek Music*, has given an incomparable analysis of the Greek scales, and solved so many of the outstanding problems that we can fairly say that Greek music is no longer a mystery to us. Building on the work of West and others, John Landels has produced a lively and illuminating survey of what we know, including transcriptions of the few surviving scores, one of them (possibly) a fragment of Euripides. His book can be recommended to any musical person wishing to imagine for himself the sound, the atmosphere and the meaning of ancient song and dance.

Landels devotes considerable attention to that *mysterious instrument*, the aulos or double pipe, whose mythic origins are recorded in the fable of Marsyas. The aulos, like the oboe, is a reed instrument, whose pitch is altered by stopping holes in the pipes, in the manner of a recorder. But why two pipes? Not in order to sound separate notes in two-part harmony. Such a practice was unknown in Greece: the word "*harmonia*" denoted the relation between consecutive rather than simultaneous tones. The two pipes of the aulos in fact played in unison, but a unison just imperfect enough to create "beats" between the notes. This is the source of that intoxicating timbre for which the instrument was known in ancient times, and for which (I like to imagine) Marsyas was so horribly punished by Apollo.


Dionysus playing a lyre

Perhaps the most useful aspect of Landels's study, beside the meticulous account of the ancient instruments, is the analysis that he gives of the rhythm and metre of Greek verse, and his account of the relation between melody and accent when this verse was performed in the theatre. The fragments which he transcribes from the existing scores are, it must be said, of no evident musical merit. But they enable us to see how closely speech rhythm and melodic line were blended in Greek performance. The effect is of mesmerising chant, in which a subliminal sense of key is constantly submerged in the microtonal division of the Greek scales.

Two of the fragments (the longest) are Delphic paeans. One is an early Christian hymn. They remind us that the classical ideal of music did not perish with the death of Greece, even if (as Landels shows) the Romans did little to preserve it. The idea of music as a continuous communing of the human and the divine was reborn after the Dark Ages in Gregorian chant. The spiritualising power of music is celebrated by Pindar and by all the poets and philosophers of Greece; but it is brought home to us in another way by plainsong. Thanks to this — the last gasp of antiquity and the first of the medieval world — we know just what it was for human life to be lived, as once it was lived, through music.


The wolf inside the man: Neil Jordan's film *The Company of Wolves* (1984) depicted the dark side of fairy tales, where loved ones harbour cruel desires

Children's tales of sex and death

BEL MOONEY

THE CLASSIC FAIRY TALES
Edited by Maria Tatar
W. W. Norton, £6.95
ISBN 0 393 97277 1



In a telling passage in her journals, Sylvia Plath bewails the contrast between the world of fairytale and the shock of real life: "Why the hell are we conditioned into the smooth, strawberry-and-cream Mother Goose world, Alice-in-Wonderland fable, only to be broken on the wheel as we grow older and become aware of ourselves as individuals with a dull responsibility in life? To learn snide and smutty meanings of words you once loved, like Fairy".

It is odd that someone so prone to seek the dark side of the Moon could have regarded the world of Mother Goose as other than rough and dangerous, and failed to acknowledge the suggestiveness of fairytales in which fathers lust after their daughters and the prince impregnates the maiden locked in her tower. So the innocent world of Plath's fantasy dropped with blood and hostile forces dwelt in the darkness of its woods. Plath's contemporary Anne Sexton understood this too well. Her poem-sequence *Transformations* puts a terrifying spin on the most familiar tales.

The revisioning of fairytales has become a modern industry, from Bettelheim through Angela Carter and Margaret Atwood to Marina Warner, who has earned the role of High-Priestess to the cult. For scholars and the general reader this Norton Critical Edition, edited by Maria Tatar, will be an invaluable addition to the library, providing source texts of different tale "types", lucid introductions to the work of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, samples of the "imitators", Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde, with a wide, useful selection of criticism.

Fairy or folk tales do not belong to anyone or anywhere: they are an expression of a collective unconsciousness, cross-cultural and kaleidescopic. So Cinderella turns up as Yeh-hsien in China, Cendrillon in Italy, Aschenputtel in Germany and Catskin in England. Angela Carter likened these variants to different ways of making potato soup all over the world, setting the tales originally told by women firmly among the domestic arts — a point first made by Plato, when he referred to the "old wives tales" told by nurses to amuse and frighten children.

Was that all they were for? Perrault added morals to his retellings, and the brothers Grimm saw their collection as a "manual of manners". The suffering to be found within the pages of Hans Andersen is intended to arouse compassion — as poor vain Karen's amputated feet dance on in the fatal red shoes. Yet it is hard to see some of the most barbaric tales — where children are chopped up, stewed and eaten, step-parents are aided in their wickedness by indifferent natural parents, and rape is implicit — could be as "civilising" as Grimm insisted. Psychoanalysts like Bruno Bettelheim interpret such stories as expression of the deepest fears that haunt children — not of hobgoblins, but of loss and separation. The purpose was to explain life; the teller of tales interpreted to the tribe the dilemmas and dangers each of them would face.

Recent Darwinian analysis by Martin Daley and Margo Watson, has sought to tell *The Truth about Cinderella* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson). They have sought to make sense of the iconic folk-type of abused step-child in terms of animal behaviour (the tendency for the *arriviste* male to kill existing young) but also by using evidence from societies around the world to show the shockingly high rate of abuse by step-parents. Thus the folk tale was demonstrating a truth borne out by human experience. The wolf may be out there in the darkness but the real danger is just across the room. Or reflected in the mirror, of course.

IN metro THIS SATURDAY

Alex O'Connell talks to Georgina Wroe about her novel *Slaphead*, a sideways look at post-glasnost Russia
ALSO: meet the cobra — Cath Urquhart reviews *The Snakebite Survivors' Club*; and Shakespeare's love poetry

Back from the battle zone

RUSSELL CELYN JONES

SONNY LISTON WAS A FRIEND OF MINE
By Thom Jones
Faber & Faber, £9.99
ISBN 0 571 19656 X



"The thing that makes you good in the ring is the very thing that makes life outside the gym impossible", Uncle Mikey says in the title story of this collection. Boxing makes sense while the rest of the world doesn't. Thom Jones's philosophy sees life as a paradox: war is deadly but makes the participants feel most alive: the body endures gruelling punishments which fuel the mind and heart to handle the bends.

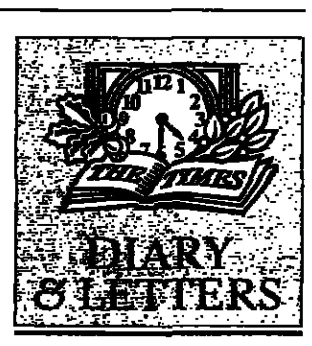
Everyone is at war with themselves. A tryptic of Vietnam stories reprieve the *Break on Thru* company from Jones's earlier collection, *The Pugilist at Rest*. They are on R&R in *The Roadrunner*, in which a bird is set on fire by a soldier — an image that plays back as a bad omen during combat in *A Run Through the Jungle*. This is a gripping tale in its realism, solid with the nomenclature of war: "Pink showed up at Camp Clarke wearing Spec Five insignia and an Air Cav pink team badge."

In *Fields of Purple Forever*, Ondine from *Break on Thru* swims the length of the English channel and other seas, because "after the adrenaline of Vietnam, a six-pack and a night of TV viewing just don' cut it." Ondine is black, so too is the narrative, in alliteration and dialect. It demonstrates Jones's range of voice which make these first four stories blaze with life.

As a former boxer, Marine and epileptic, Jones can draw on a wide range of experience to lend his writing an emotional vividness. But just as you are marvelling at his gifts he vandalises his own enterprise.

In half of these stories there is a falling away from excellence. His narrative approach — a violent foreground underscored by past trauma — tends to fizzle out on a bromide. The settings continue to be hostile territories: a mental hospital, an inner city school, a neurology clinic, but his characters are too misogynistic and sadistic to be taken seriously. The voice also loses sharpness.

Jones has a lot of people rooting for him: reviewers, editors of *Playboy* and *The New Yorker* where many of these stories appeared. His publishers claim that this is "real literature instead of its shallow imitation." On aggregate this is well deserved. But I have to concur with Baudalaire's "disgust with reality" after reading the second half of this collection that forces you to reconsider the acheivements of the first. Which is a pity, because when Thom Jones is good he is very, very good.



■ **A FEW notes from the department of corrections and clarifications. In our *Bibliomane* column of January 28, we called into question the musical experience of the Director of the music publishing department of Oxford University Press, Andrew Potter. Mr Potter wishes to point out that he has extensive experience as a musician. He has been Director of the Press's music publishing for 16 years, is a choral conductor and is current Chairman of the Performing Rights Society. Our apologies. Dr C. J. Ellis writes too, from Birmingham Heartlands Hospital, regarding Peter Ackroyd's contention in his review of *The White Death, A History of Tuberculosis* (January 21) that "whenever victims of illness hear the words 'expert' or 'specialist' they should reach for their guns", drawing parallels between early treatments for TB and those for HIV. Dr Ellis draws our attention to the great leaps medical science has made in the treatment of Aids-related illness, and his point is well made.**

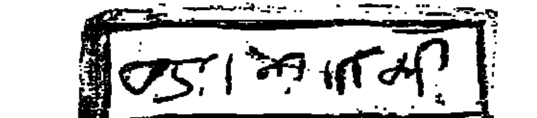
■ *Penguin Books are starting on a great enterprise — putting all 60 of Nikolaus Pevsner's massive guides to British architecture on line. They will be included in the new Chadwyck-Healey information service, KnowUK, and will be available free in about 250 public libraries, including all their branch libraries, where of course they can be immediately called up. How, we wondered, can Penguin make anything out of this? No problem, it seems. The libraries pay for a limited number of hits, and are charged more if their clients want more. An annual single-user's subscription to KnowUK costs £2,400. Money in books, still.*

■ ANOTHER party to try to gatecrash — or not, as the case may be. At the reception at PJ's Grill for Edwina Currie's new novel *The Ambassador*, on February 25, we hear that the first 100 guests will get a free book and an "Ambassador cocktail". That wouldn't be the same thing as a Molotov cocktail, would it?

■ ***The Duke of Valderano has published his memoirs, called* The Owl and the Pussycat, *with Minerva Press (£8.99), and as with much "vanity publishing" (where the author pays for the book to come out) there is a good deal in it about his heroic exploits in different parts of the world. But he has a good tip about eating out in Spain. When he was there with his wife ("the pussycat"), they called the restaurants "one-priest", "two-priest" and so on, like stars, because they always found that the more priests at the tables, the better the food.***

■ IRIS MURDOCH, the remarkable novelist who died on Monday, had a reverence for her art — and knew just who her saints were. A friend tells us he once received from her a postcard of the great portrait of Henry James by Sargent. In the corner she had written: "Blessed H.J., pray for us."

■ **E-mail us at: books@the-times.co.uk**



Bargains of the week: play bridge in Hove; whisk your Valentine to Paris; take a trawler trip along the Vietnamese coast



■ *A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and farther afield, many at bargain prices*

BRITISH ISLES

DISCOUNTS are available at a choice of youth hostels between February 20 and 28, with a 25 per cent reduction on an overnight stay — with breakfast or full board — at 16 locations in England and Wales. They include Hampstead, North London, where B&B is £13.90, and full board £19.70. Details: 01727 845047.

■ DALE Hill hotel and golf club in East Sussex has a two-for-one room offer this month and a two-for-one tee time deal next month. Two people sharing a room will pay £54, while two golfers can choose between the old course for £20 in midweek or the Ian Woosnam course for £40. Slightly higher prices apply at weekends. Details: 01580 200112.

■ THE natural beauty of the Ribble Valley, Lancashire, and the chance to improve one's own beauty are included in a weekend break with Andrew's Coaches from February 26. Leave from Derbyshire for two nights' half board plus beauty demonstrations at a former Victorian manor house with a leisure club and pool.

Priced from £119. Details: 01298 871222.

■ A TASTE of southern Ireland is available from £72 during March and April with Irish Ferries Holidays. Sail from Pembroke to Rosslare with a car and spend three nights with breakfast in town or country homes. The price is based on four travelling together. Details: 0990 170000.

■ A BRIDGE weekend in Hove, "fun and relaxing rather than competitive or intensive", takes place on March 12 to 14. A skilful host helps players to develop their game. The Acorn Activities break costs £175 with two nights' full board at the Dudley Hotel. Details: 01432 830083.

■ CHARNWOOD Forest and the paths around Rutland Water will be explored on a walking holiday with Whistler Breaks from March 18 to 21. Based at Melton Mowbray, the trip includes eight-mile walks each day with a guide and pub lunch, and costs from £258 with no single supplements. Details: 01743 718964.

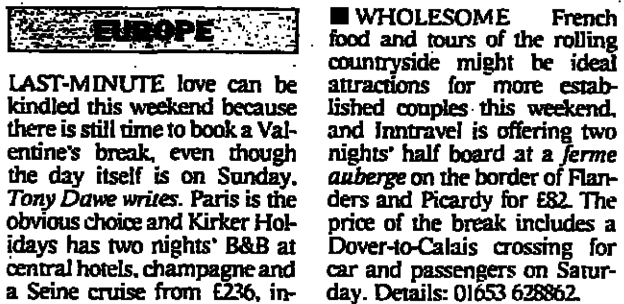
■ WEEKEND visitors to the Channel Islands can enjoy special rates from Holiday Autos, starting at £49 for car hire between midday on Friday and Monday morning. Details: 0990 300411.

■ CHILSTON Park, the 17th-century hotel at Lenham, Kent, filled with antiques and lit by candles at night, is offering Easter breaks complete with eggs and champagne, archery and falconry. Prices start from £179 for two nights. Details: 01622 859803.



Take an Easter Break at picturesque Chilston Park in Kent

See the Norwegian fjords on a four-day trip at half term, sailing from Newcastle. A cabin for three nights is from £54



EUROPE

LAST-MINUTE love can be kindled this weekend because there is still time to book a Valentine's break, even though the day itself is on Sunday, *Tony Dawe writes*. Paris is the obvious choice and Kirker Holidays has two nights' B&B at central hotels, champagne and a Seine cruise from £236, including Eurostar travel. Depart tomorrow, Saturday or Sunday. Details: 0171-231 3333.

■ BRUSSELS is equally easy to reach by Eurostar and Sol Melia is offering discounts this weekend at its new city centre hotel. A double room with breakfast costs £65 and Eurostar has return fares for £106. Details: hotel, 0800 962720; rail, 0990 186186.

Short Breaks is also featuring Valentine weekends in Brussels and in Antwerp, the world's diamond capital, from £154 for two nights with rail travel. Details: 0181-402 0007.

■ WHOLESOME French food and tours of the rolling countryside might be ideal attractions for more established couples this weekend, and Inntravel is offering two nights' half board at a *ferme auberge* on the border of Flanders and Picardy for £82. The price of the break includes a Dover-to-Calais crossing for car and passengers on Saturday. Details: 01653 628862.

■ ROMANTICS who miss Valentine's Day can make amends by taking their partner on a proper holiday — and one of the best offers, starting with a flight from Gatwick on Tuesday, is a fortnight's half-board in Palma, Majorca, for £219 with First Choice. Details: 0870-750 0100.

■ CYPRUS is still marketing itself as the island of Aphrodite, goddess of love, and the prices are certainly attractive from Argo Holidays. Fly from Gatwick on February 21 or 28 and a week's self-catering in Paphos costs £179. A fortnight's stay at the resort costs an extra £80, and flight-only deals are also available. Details: 0171-331 7070.

■ ISTANBUL is on offer from £269 for short breaks with Metak Holidays. Fly from Heathrow and spend three nights with breakfast in the Sunlight Hotel, close to the Blue Mosque and museums. Details: 0171-935 6961.

■ THREE nights for the price of two and free entry to the spectacular Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao are on offer from Mundi Color until March 25. The deal includes return flights from Heathrow and B&B at a central four-star hotel, and costs from £269. Details: 0171-828 6021.

■ NORWAY's stunning coastline will be the backdrop for a series of four-day bargain cruises with Fjord Line, still available over half-term. Sail from Newcastle on the next two Saturdays or Tuesdays for a 1,000-mile journey that takes in Stavanger and Haugesund, with an overnight stop at Bergen. Prices start at £54 for three nights' cabin accommodation and breakfast, with children under 16 half-price. Details: 0191-296 1313.

■ SKIING in Norway and a wide range of other winter sports are on offer from Scandinavian Travel Service for departures on February 18, March 24 and April 14. Three nights' full board in Gala and return flights from Stansted cost from £270. Details: 0171-559 6666.

■ EASTER holidays will already be in some travellers' minds, and one of the most civilised ways of enjoying the break will surely be a six-day tour of Loire châteaux and vineyards with Arblaster & Clarke Wine Tours. The trip costs £499 with coach and overnight ferry travel (with cabin). Details: 01730 893344.

LONG HAUL

CHINA comes closer in the coming weeks as far as price is concerned, *Tony Dawe writes*. For less than £500, travellers can choose between exploring Beijing or seeing how Hong Kong has changed since British rule ended in 1997.

Five-night breaks in Beijing are on offer from British Airways Holidays, including accommodation and return flights from Heathrow on Thursdays or Sundays. These are available until the end of the month for £449 from Advantage Travel Centres. Details: 0870-909 0070.

The Hong Kong trip, also for five nights, is available until March 17 from Bridge The World and costs from £498, with return flights from Heathrow. Details: 0171-911 0900.

For those who prefer something more exotic — and expensive — Bales Worldwide proposes a 16-day adventure including Beijing and the Forbidden City, the Terracotta Warriors at Xi'an, a seldom-walked stretch of the Great Wall and boat and train trips. Fly from Heathrow on March 27 and pay from £1,755. Details: 01306 885991.

■ NEW YORK or Boston for £149 return, including tax, is a new offer for students and under-26s from usit Campus. You must book by February 20 and complete your travel by the end of June. Los Angeles and San Francisco are also available for £195 return. Details: 0171-730 2101.

■ WEEKEND breaks to New York are also on offer from Funway Holidays, with three nights at a central hotel costing £315, including flights from a choice of airports. Details: 0181-466 0222.

■ FLY down Mexico way on February 23 from Gatwick for a week's all-inclusive Thomson holiday in Puerto or Nuevo Vallarta, which will cost £499 with Lunn Poly. Details from Holiday Shops.

■ ALMOND Beach Village, a leading all-inclusive resort in Barbados with half a mile of beach, nine pools and a nine-hole golf course, is available at a £270 saving until March 19 from Thomas Cook Holidays. A week's stay now costs £1,225 with return flights from Gatwick. Details: 01733 418450.

■ VIETNAM is a destination with a difference, and The Imaginative Traveller is adding extra spice to an eight-day trip, starting with a flight from Heathrow on February 20. A voyage along a spectacular coastline on a converted trawler and a three-day trek through a northern hill tribe region are included in the £720 package. Details: 0181-742 8612.

■ THE Maldives with a week's full board is available for £889 from Somak Holidays. Choose from resorts on neighbouring islands, with the chance to sail between them to share facilities that include watersports and fishing. The flights leave from Heathrow every Sunday in March. Details: 0181-423 3000.



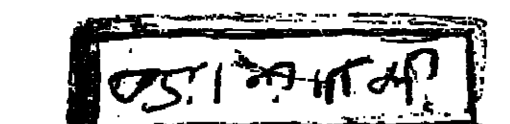
A street vendor in Vietnam

■ BASK in Banjul is the suggestion of Eclipse, which is offering a week's B&B in The Gambia for £309 with a flight from Gatwick on March 4. Details: 0990 010203.

All prices are per person and based on two sharing a room unless otherwise stated.

WEEKEND TRAVEL

See *The Times* on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays



GOLF

Faldo aims to make his point

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN DUBAI

THE plunge that Nick Faldo has taken from the heady days when he was the best golfer in the world has been noticed and commented upon often enough. Even so, there was another cruel reminder of his lowly status in a sport that he once dominated as he prepared for the Desert Classic, which starts at the Dubai Creek golf course this morning.

In 1993 Faldo was joined by Greg Norman, Ernie Els and Severiano Ballesteros in a four-ball that officially opened this course on the banks of the creek that bisects Dubai. In those days he was the most feared golfer in the world, having won five major championships, the most recent at Muirfield in July of the previous year.

Now he has plummeted to 65th in the world. As if that were not ignominious enough, Faldo knows that the leading 64 will be entitled to compete in the first World Golf Championship (WGC) event of the year, the Andersen Consulting Matchplay Championship at the La Costa club in San Diego, California, in two weeks. WGC events offer huge purses that count towards Ryder Cup points and Faldo is desperate to appear for a twelfth time in the famous biennial competition against the United States.

Faldo has constructed his 1999 schedule to acquire as many Ryder Cup points as possible. He has not often competed in South Africa lately but there he was last month, missing the halfway cut in one event and finishing 43rd in the other, in events to which he would not normally pay any attention.

As he does so, he resembles a man scrambling around to find the final few pounds for a mortgage offer. This event is his last chance to climb back into the top 64 as entries close on Sunday.

"I am keeping a watchful eye on the rankings," Faldo said. "Plan A is to play decent. If I do, then I shall fly to the US and prepare for the WGC. It is such a big event, triple the size of most of our events. If you have a good week there, you could bite off a big chunk towards making the Ryder Cup team.

"In fact, if you won there you'd be in the team, it's as simple as that. If I do not, then so be it. I shall play next week in Qatar in order to secure some Ryder Cup points that way. I want to be in the Ryder Cup. I love it. It is a great event."

There is a possibility that Faldo will get a back-door entry to California because it is rumoured that Jumbo Ozaki, the leading Japanese player, will not play. But, of course, Faldo needs to remain at least 65th to take full advantage. In short, his situation is full of ifs and buts.

The way for Faldo to ensure his place in California at the end of the month is to win here. To do so he must defeat a field that includes Mark O'Meara, the Open champion, and Colin Montgomerie, the winner of the order of merit. Both will be making their first appearances this year on the European Tour.

The nine previous Desert Classics were held at the magnificent Emirates course a few miles down the road to Abu Dhabi. With its much-photographed clubhouse and some magnificent holes on a verdant green property that was hewn out of the desert, the Emirates course was stunning. Now this par-72 course is being given its chance and, judging by appearances, it will test the players more than the Emirates course did.

The rough is fierce and any shot off target will be heavily punished. Furthermore, the rolling fairways have been narrowed, so accuracy off the tee is vital.

Brady thrives in hostile business

SARAH POTTER





LAWRENCE LAWRY

Smart woman: Brady's financial acumen has enabled her to overcome prejudice and gain acceptance in football's boardrooms.

The managing director of Birmingham City has no professional interest in the FA Cup fifth-round ties this weekend, though marriage to Paul Peschisolido, the Fulham forward, will mean a Sunday outing to Old Trafford's "Theatre of Dreams".

Karren Brady — mocked as an empty-headed tabloid gimmick when Sport Newspapers bought Birmingham from liquidation six years ago — is not kicking around another football cliché when she says her club can now concentrate on the league. Fifth spot in the Nationwide League first division, share prices that value the club at £20 million and a swanky new stand that is about to lift the capacity at St Andrew's to 30,000 suggest that Birmingham are ready for the FA Carling Premiership.

"That would be our next big financial jump," Brady, 29, said. "I would say we've maximised on all areas, bearing in mind our league status. When we bought the club 'unhealthy' would've been the kind way to describe it. There was no ambition and that was reflected in the kind of players it had, the turnover and the level of support, which was about 6,000."

Now only Sunderland, the leaders, pack in more fans for home games in the division. Birmingham's pre-tax operating profit was £1.16 million for the year ended August 1998 — an increase of more than £400,000 on the previous year. That was largely created by an 11 per cent rise in commercial income, underlining Brady's assertion that football is big business. "A lot of the people who knew me would expect the club to be in the healthy position it now is," she said.

"Those who said I was a publicity stunt are probably begrudgingly saying 'she hasn't done badly'. I never realised what a closed fort football really was and how people would react. It was very much 'oh, my God there's a woman going into football'."

Tabloid attention followed her with a passion usually reserved for wayward strikers and cranky managers. "The year after I took control we were accused of poaching Barry Fry from Southend," she said. "*The Mirror* had a back-page headline 'Sex Shooter', because it was when the film, *Basic Instinct*, was out. The chairman of Southend said, 'Oh, she'll be doing her Sharon Stone at the tribunal'. It was weird that people would take it to that extreme."

'Let's face it, no one has got bigger balls than Ken Bates'

Nonetheless, by her own admission, her four-year management role with Sport Newspapers, working alongside David Gold and David Sullivan, the owners, did groom her for the colourful headlines. "Ninety-nine per cent of the back pages in sport are wrong," she said. "They're based on rumour."

Whispers that the managing director was forming a partnership with Peschisolido did, however, turn out to be fact. He was the club's leading scorer and many thought he was sold because of their relationship. "Five years later we're married with two children and everything is great," she said. "The fact that Paul was sold and then bought back, neither of which were my decisions, proves there was no conflict of interest."

Motherhood seems to have softened Brady and has possibly kept her at Birmingham. "I have been offered a lot of jobs," she said, "but it would mean uprooting the children and having a nanny bringing them up. I feel I'm good at that and want to do it myself. It's the most important thing to me and I wouldn't compromise them to take an opportunity for myself."

Paulo, at five months old, is too young to be a football supporter but Sophia, two, is showing potential. "I took her to Fulham's cup-tie at Aston Villa," Brady said. "We were in the directors' box when she shouted 'come on daddy, you're No 1! You're on fire!' It was so funny — we've got our tickets for Manchester United."

At the risk of upsetting her husband, Brady wants Kevin Keegan, Peschisolido's manager at Fulham, as the next England manager. "He has incredible style and is such an honourable man," she said. "I can't see anyone putting a turnip, or parrot, around his head because he's too respected. He's the perfect choice."

As for chairman of the Football Association, Brady trumpets Ken Bates, the controversial Chelsea chairman. "At least for the short term," she said, "because you need balls to make changes. Let's face it, no one's got bigger balls than Ken Bates." When she chooses, Brady still knows how to make a headline.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Winning pair go own way

■ **BADMINTON:** One of England's most successful partnerships announced yesterday that they are splitting up, three days after winning their sixth successive national men's doubles title. Chris Hunt and Simon Archer will play in the World Grand Prix finals in Brunei at the end of this month and in the domestic Friends Provident Grand Slam final in May, but for the Yonex All-England Championships in Birmingham next month, Archer will partner Nathan Robertson while Hunt teams up with Julian Robertson.

■ **TENNIS:** Pete Sampras, the world No 1, made his 1999 debut looking well rested and in good form, taking only an hour to advance to the second round of an ATP event in San Jose, California. Sampras beat Galo Blanco, of Spain, 6-4, 6-4, losing only one point on his first service and only eight on his service overall. He hit 11 aces, double-faulted only once and never faced a break point.

■ **CRICKET:** Hampshire have signed Steve Lugsden, the 22-year-old Durham fast bowler, on a one-year contract to provide cover for Nixon McLean, the West Indies bowler, who is likely to miss the first half of the season on World Cup duty.

■ **SQUASH:** The demands of the national championships last week were all too evident in the league action this week, with only Julian Wellings, the UK Packaging second string, winning after playing in Manchester (Colin McQuillan writes). Wellings beat Del Harris and John White, the Scottish champion, in the nationals, and produced one of the best performances of his career to challenge Paul Johnson, the new British champion, throughout a 44-minute, 17-14, 15-13, 15-12 quarter-final that was a good deal closer than the scoreline suggested. On Tuesday, he beat Bradley Hall, of Edgbaston Priory, 15-13, 15-6, 15-10, to provide the vital point in his team's 3-2 win.

Kear keeps Eagles flying high

Christopher Irvine meets a coach who is determined to advance after pulling off one of the great surprises of last year

ONE incentive that Sheffield Eagles have in defending the Silk Cut Challenge Cup, which starts for them away to Salford Reds on Saturday, is the possibility of John Kear, their coach, renewing his on-screen double act with Sue Barker. "Make it on to *Sunday Grandstand* and you're safely through to the next round," Kear said, all matter-of-fact.

Actually, the Sue and John Show became as much a talking point throughout rugby league as Sheffield's odyssey in reaching Wembley, where their defeat of Wigan Warriors last May was the definitive triumph of the sporting underdog. Kear, the first English coach since Malcolm Reilly with Castleford in 1986 to win a Challenge Cup final, is a natural performer. The goodwill that greeted the 17-8 triumph by the Eagles also engulfed the man whose unshakable belief was vindicated.

Given a snowball's chance in an oven of surviving against Wigan, Sheffield never imagined defeat to be a possibility. Kear can cajole the most ordinary player to perform and, as a result, the lambs to the slaughter frolicked. "It shows what the mind can do to make the body achieve," Kear said afterwards.

Kear felt that triumph transformed the club overnight. "We were suddenly bigger," he said. "After 14 years in existence, the magnitude of what we'd done commanded the respect of the game and the attention of south Yorkshire. Expectations were greater and those pressures weighed heavily on some players. We had a reaction to winning the cup, which is why I see consistency in Super League as our No 1 priority this season."

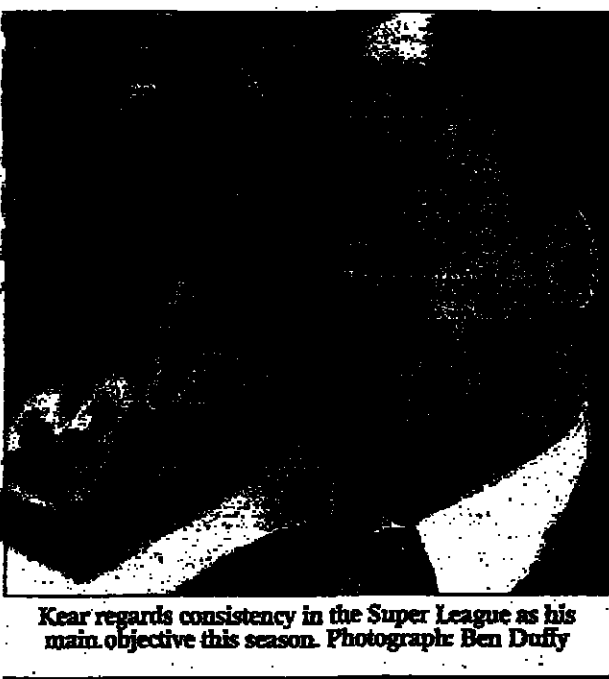
Not that any side Kear is in charge of would lie down. There can be no sneaking up the rails this year, as a rebuilt Salford side seek to avenge their semi-final defeat last year in the fourth round. Sheffield have lost the two Pauls — Broadbent and Carr, cornerstones of their pack — but have compensated in other areas. Karl Lovell and Jeff Hardy, both from Australia, have proved handy signings along with the former Halifax trio of Martin Pearson, Daio Powell and Simon Baldwin, while versatile Paul Anderson has joined from St Helens.

Kear was offered a coaching position with St Helens last summer but rejected it. "I've an awful lot more to do and I wanted to show loyalty to the people here who gave me my chance," he said. "When I arrived three seasons ago, players outnumbered fans at the supporters' night. It was standing room only this time."

Is football-obsessed Sheffield really falling for the oval ball? Attendances at the cavernous Don Valley Stadium averaged 4,600 last year. Season-ticket sales have doubled this season. At a top price of £90, they are the cheapest of the JJB Super League clubs, with discounts on goods by LG Electronics, sponsor of the Eagles, thrown in. "It's an attempt finally to put to bed all those comments that Sheffield people are soccer supporters, not rugby supporters," Tim Adams, the Sheffield chairman, said.

Adams did another smart piece of business when he extended Kear's contract to the end of 2001. Consistency as a top-five outfit is the broader focus for Kear, but as someone born across the road from Castleford's Wheldon Road ground, who followed "Cas" to Wembley in 1969 and 1970 and was part of Reilly's backroom team in 1986, the Challenge Cup surpasses anything in the sport.

"The traditions of the cup sit comfortably with the innovation of the Super League Grand Final, but Wembley is where my dreams have been realised," Kear said. "Once you've tasted, you want more. It'll be harder to retain it, but we won't let go without an almighty fight." Bring on Sue Barker...



Kear regards consistency in the Super League as his main objective this season. Photograph: Ben Duffy

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE CUP: Third round: Marlow v Hendon

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Backwell v Barnstaple.

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Barkingside v Somersett Ambury; Royston v Harpenden. Challenge Trophy: Third round: Potters Bar Town v Toddington; Waltham Abbey v Islington St Mary's.

FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Dundalk v Sligo (7.45).

OTHER SPORT

ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: Cardiff Devils v Bracknell Bees (7.30); Newcastle Riverkings v Ayr Scottish Eagles (7.15).



SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Runs to Resort	Off-p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	80	90	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	10/2
Austria								
Kitzbühel	90	180	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	10/2
Obergurgl	55	270	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-19	10/2
Söll	100	180	Good	Open	Powder	Fine	-4	9/2
St Anton	160	480	Good	[illegible]	Powder	Sun	-8	9/2
France								
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Cloud	-11	9/2
[illegible]	120	[illegible]	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fair	-2	9/2
[illegible]	[illegible]	250	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	-13	9/2
[illegible]	220	460	[illegible]	[illegible]	Powder	Snow	-19	10/2
[illegible]	140	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fair	-6	9/2
La Plagne	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Cloud	-12	10/2
[illegible]	174	250	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fair	-5	9/2
[illegible]	170	270	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fair	-6	9/2
[illegible]	125	290	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fair	-9	9/2
[illegible]	[illegible]	280	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	9/2
[illegible]	[illegible]	230	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fair	-17	9/2
[illegible]	150	320	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	9/2
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Chris McGrath on a trainer seeking a change of Festival luck

Meade looks to cardinal rule

Nothing would put the Irish in better voice for Istabraq and Florida Pearl at next month's Cheltenham Festival than to hail success in its opening race for Noel Meade.

On the face of it, Cardinal Hill, who goes on trial at Punchestown on Sunday, has excellent prospects in the Citroen Supreme Novices' Hurdle — but he must exorcise an apparent curse on his trainer. At Cheltenham, Meade is rather like a centre forward who scores hat-tricks with his eyes closed in the league, but is menaced by misfortune when representing his country.

He is not found wanting in skill or instinct, just plain unlucky. He hits the post, a teammate gets in the way, the ball is cleared off the line. Last year, when Hill Society blurred past the post in the Guinness Arkle Trophy alongside Martin Pipe's Champleve, it hit the underside of the bar and bounced on the line. But the judge found in Champleve's favour by the width of one of the many betting vouchers doomed by his decision.

Surrounded by fretful hundreds in the winner's enclosure, Meade had endured a cruel wait as a print of the finish was developed. Pipe, prolific at the Festival, agreed that a dead-heat would do nicely as the minutes crawled by. They struck a curious contrast: Pipe hopping around like a restless, shrill bird, Meade rangy, rumbling and slack. For now, however, the Irishman did not smoke to be in harmony with his easy-going, open nature, but only to stop himself screaming with tension.

"Everyone on the way down said we'd won," Meade recalls. "But Richard [Dunwoody] said we might be ahead before and after, but beat on the line. That prepared me for the worst, anyway.

"Martin came up and said he thought he was beat. It took so long. Then, of course, I was number six, and he was 16, and the judge called it out: first number six...teen. It was heart-breaking."

Meade, 48, vacantly accepted the commiserations and turned on his heel. "I walked straight out to the car park and sat down on the bonnet of the car and had a smoke and a chat with one of the attendants, all about the joys of parking cars at Cheltenham. About 20 minutes or so. Just to get myself together again."



CAROLINE NORRIS

Meade narrowly missed a Cheltenham Festival winner last season with Hill Society

It would be nice to think that this conversation will prove the nadir of Meade's torments, albeit he is not becoming paranoid. "It happens every day," he shrugs. "I know it's Cheltenham and all that, but sometimes it's just as hard getting beat at Leopardstown. Nobody wants to win at the Festival more than I do, but every day when you're in a photo-finish, it's important for somebody."

After all, he adds, it is only within the last five years that he has reversed the proportions of Flat and National Hunt horses in his Co Meath stables, so that three-quarters of his 80-odd horses are now jumpers.

Nonetheless the litany of Festival near-misses makes you wince. Even last year, Hill Society's defeat was compounded by that of Avocat in the County Hurdle, after hitting the last. In previous years, Meade had watched Embellished brought down on the flat when cruising to the last in the Triumph Hurdle (in which he once saddled another short-head runner-up).

"Then there was Tiananmen Square, who came up against Montelado, while Heist got beaten by Rhythm Section when he probably shouldn't have been. There's only 20 races every year and as the three days progress, you think, oh no, not again. But there's nothing you can do but get them there as right as you can."

But even this can be out of your hands. Meade feared that his demons were clustering early when several fancied horses disappointed him two weeks ago. He has been consoled by one or two winners since, but will doubtless be relieved if Cardinal Hill, the first horse he has trained for J P McManus, puts his Sunday best foot forward.

Cardinal Hill has only run twice over timber and mistakes contributed to his first defeat at Fairyhouse in November. Paul Carberry found himself in front after the horse broke the fifth flight, so blunting his principal asset, a turn of foot at the finish. "I love Paul dearly and he's a very talented rider," Meade said. "But, in my opinion, he gave the horse a horlicks of a ride. When the horse made the mistake, okay, he gave a slap down the neck to say, come on, watch what you're at, and the horse came back on the bridle and got very free with him. Paul said he couldn't hold him. But I think he should have been able to drop him in.

He just took the easy option, let him go on. Against the horses he was with that day, it was the wrong decision. As Jim Dreaper said afterwards, Alexander Banquet is like the taxman. He'll follow you forever. If we'd just sat on his tail, we'd have only had to pull out to beat him."

Yet Meade is not too concerned about the horse's inexperience. "He jumps very well at home. He just seemed to duck at the horse in front at Fairyhouse, hardly jumped the hurdle at all, sort of galloped over it. Then he made a mistake two out, but that was because he'd been in front so long. He still would have won otherwise. I've no doubt he is a very good horse."

In Florida Pearl, the Irish crave an end to the long wait for a horse to compare with Arkle. You need not take such reckless ambitions to Cheltenham, of course, to court disappointment. This year, however, perhaps they can all refuel their dreams — even Noel Meade.

Huntingdon waits on inspection

RACECOURSE officials are hoping that the forecast milder weather will arrive to mark a return to National Hunt racing after two blank jumping days.

Wincanton became the thirtieth meeting lost this season when today's fixture was called off yesterday. The other jump fixture, at Huntingdon, is subject to an inspection at 7.30am. Hugo Bevan, the clerk of the course, said yesterday: "Ninety-five per cent of the course is raceable and things have improved. However, prospects are no higher than 50-50. The forecast is for a frost of -4C tonight and, if that was the case, then we would be in trouble."

Officials at Newbury are more confident about their two-day fixture tomorrow and Saturday going ahead after the temperature rose enough yesterday for the frost to disappear.

HUNTINGDON

THUNDERER
1.50 Rusk. 2.20 Wren Warbler. 2.50 NATIVE KING (nap). 3.20 Peace Lord. 3.50 Formidable Partner. 4.20 Guiting Gray. 4.50 Classic Eagle

Carl Evans: 4.20 Guiting Gray.

GOING: SOFT (7.30AM INSPECTION) SIS

1.50 GLATTON HURDLE (£2,094. 2m 110yd) (12 runners)

1 0- GEORDIE LAD 392F M Bradstock 5-11-10 R Studholme (5) –
2 214E BRAMBLES WAY 65 (D,F,G,S) F Jordan 10-11-8 A P McCoy [102]
3 /00- BREAK THE RULES 232F (D,G,S) Miss H Martis 7-11-8 Mr N Fehily (7) 18
4 0 LITTLE MISS LUCY 63 M Heaton-Ellis 5-11-7 B Powell –
5 MANIKATO 8F D Cosgrove 5-11-6 B Fenton –
6 5P-0 MEAD COURT 8 (S) H Manners 9-11-6 S Curran 60
7 6P32 RUSK 28 (CD,S) J Allen 6-11-6 N Hannity (7) 90
8 P603 ANOTHERONE TO NOTE 16 H Manners 8-11-2 M Newman (7) 45
9 0630 LOFTY DEED 58 (B,D,S) Mrs C Hicks 9-11-2 M Keighley (7) 67
10 0 JACK REEF 21 D McCain 4-11-0 A C Coyle (5) –
11 1F20 BRANCEPETH BELLE 13 (S) N Mason 9-10-13 R Guest 68
12 00 HORIZONTAL 54 W Clay 4-10-5 G Tormey 41

2-4 Rusk, 11-4 Brambles Way, 5-1 Brancepeth Belle, 7-1 Break The Rules, 14-1 Mead Court, 16-1 Lofty Deed, 20-1 Anotherone To Note, 25-1 others.

2.20 PAUL DAVEY 40TH BIRTHDAY NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£4,835: 3m) (17)

1 1F40 CARLEY LAD 13 (D,S) N Mason 11-11-10 R Guest 106
2 21F MONICASMAN 40 (BF,F,G,S) G McCourt 9-11-7 E Husband 89
3 425P REFLEX COURIER 16 J Upson 7-11-2 J Supple 82
4 531F TOTAL JOY 15 (BF,G,S) C Mann 8-11-0 Mr N Fehily (7) 105
5 0063 RENARDINE BOY 47 (B) Mrs J Pitman 6-10-11 D Leahy –
6 PP2 ROYAL TOMMY 31 (B,D,S) O Sherwood 7-10-11 J Osborne –
7 083U FORESHORE MAN 5 (D,S) B Rothwell 8-10-9 A S Smith 100
8 5222 SANTA JET 19 (BF,C,D,S) G M Moore 8-10-7 J Callaghan [118]
9 5521 NORLANDIC 9 (D,S) P Hobbs 7-10-7 R Widger (5) –
10 042/ WARFIELD LAD 1036 (BF,S) K Bailey 10-10-3 N Williamson –
11 F-P3 WREN WARBLER 34 (S) Mrs P Robeson 9-10-1 M Richards 109
12 /355 JELALI 21 (G) D Murray Smith 6-10-0 A Maguire 83
13 P/06 ROCHARISARE 68 (F) T Etherington 10-10-0 D McPhail (5) 79
14 4P3- HYDRO 304 M Hammond 8-10-0 B Harding –
15 4P-0 OLE LARRY ANDY 145 (D,G) J Jenkins 9-10-0 M Griffiths (5) –
16 6500 IN THE VAN 33 Mrs D Haine 7-10-0 G Tormey –
17 04-P LANG WHANG 22 Mrs A J Bowlby 8-10-0 B Fenton –

7-2 Santa Jet, 5-1 Monicasman, 11-2 Norlandic, 7-1 Total Joy, 10-1 Royal Tommy, Foreshore Man, Warfield Lad, Wren Warbler, 12-1 others.

2.50 SIDNEY BANKS MEMORIAL NOVICES HURDLE (£7,220: 2m 4f 110yd) (7)

1 -211 BOSUNS MATE 40 (G,S) N T-Davies 6-11-12 C Llewellyn [125]
2 1132 RIO'S KING 40 (D,G,S) J Tuck 7-11-8 W Marston 114
3 1/12 BORO SOVEREIGN 28 (S) N Henderson 6-11-4 M A Fitzgerald 107
4 -111 CASTLE OWEN 22 (C,G,S) D Nicholson 7-11-4 R Thornton 123
5 DOC RYAN'S 72F M Ryan 5-11-4 J Ryan –
6 31 NATIVE KING 69 (G) J Old 7-11-4 T J Murphy 83
7 1151 SANTABLESS 21 (D,G,S) M Pitman 6-11-4 N Williamson 116

9-4 Rio's King, 11-4 Castle Owen, 4-1 Bosuns Mate, 6-1 Santabless, 7-1 Boro Sovereign, 10-1 Native King, 50-1 Doc Ryan's.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M Pitman, 7 winners from 16 runners, 43.8%; Miss V Williams, 3 from 8, 37.5%; Mrs M Reveley, 13 from 36, 36.1%; J Old, 7 from 21, 33.3%; P Hobbs, 5 from 16, 31.3%; N Henderson, 11 from 37, 29.7%.
JOCKEYS: L Corcoran, 4 winners from 7 rides, 57.1%; A P McCoy, 9 from 33, 27.3%; M A Fitzgerald, 17 from 75, 22.7%; N Williamson, 11 from 63, 17.5%; P Niven, 3 from 18, 16.7%; J Osborne, 8 from 51, 15.7%.

3.20 FARCET FEN HANDICAP CHASE (£4,237: 2m 4f 110yd) (10)

1 UP11 CARDINAL RULE 28 (D,G,S) Miss V Williams 10-12-0 N Williamson 121
2 -6F1 PEACE LORD 54 (D,G,S) Mrs D Haine 9-11-11 G Bradley 123
3 P14P SIERRA BAY 29 (CD,F,S) O Sherwood 9-11-9 J Osborne 120
4 1241 FERRERS 14 (C,G,S) Mrs P Sly 8-11-3 W Marston 124
5 U232 HAWAIIAN YOUTH 22 (BF,F,G,S) G McCourt 11-10-11 D Fortt (3) 127
6 2-F3 HARFDECENT 14 (F,S) Mrs M Reveley 8-10-8 P Niven 120
7 /U33 B THE ONE 24 (F) J J Quinn 8-10-6 L Wyer 120
8 613- FRYS NO FOOL 301 (G,S) J Old 9-10-2 T J Murphy 130
9 3-53 TAKE MY SIDE 24 (D,S) M J Roberts 7-10-0 A Maguire [135]
10 4P40 STAGE PLAYER 222 (F,G,S) Miss C Caroe 13-10-0 D Leahy 115

3-1 Cardinal Rule, 4-1 Harfdecent, 5-1 Peace Lord, Ferrers, 6-1 Sierra Bay, 6-1 Hawaiian Youth, 12-1 Frys No Fool, 16-1 others.

3.50 TOTE HANDICAP HURDLE (£6,044: 2m 5f 110yd) (18)

1 -501 SEIZE THE DAY 14 (CD,G,S) M Coombe 11-11-11 Miss M Coombe 105
2 42-P EL DON 19 (F,G) M Ryan 7-11-8 J Ryan –
3 5-P3 ALLEZ WIJINS 22 (G,S) N Henderson 10-11-6 M A Fitzgerald 76
4 6512 DARK KESTREL 24 (S) C Mann 5-11-6 C Rafter (7) 103
5 03P0 DOYENNE 29 (B,F) Mrs D Haine 5-11-5 C Maude 96
6 4U3P COPPER COIL 68 (F,G,S) M Pitman 9-11-2 L Corcoran (7) [121]
7 0/40 TIM 29 (C,D,F,S) J Jenkins 9-11-1 J Osborne –
8 4-46 MERILENA 97 (CD,F,G) G Hubbard 9-10-12 A Maguire 86
9 0030 CHABROL 2F (F,S) P Gilligan 6-10-11 S Curran 103
10 6203 SUNRISE SPECIAL 14 (S) P Rodford 6-10-10 S Burrough 108
11 6131 PRUSSIA 40 (F,S) W Clay 8-10-9 G Tormey 98
12 2012 AMILLIONMEMORIES 7 (F,G,S) Mrs B Waring 9-10-7 E Byrne 106
13 2412 BE BRAVE 6 (S) T Etherington 9-10-6 D McPhail (5) 112
14 06-0 BELLROI 22 (F,G) Mrs M Jones 8-10-6 M Richards –
15 2134 BOWLES PATROL 33 (BF,S) J Upson 7-10-6 J Supple 107
16 4204 FORMIDABLE PARTNER 41 Mrs V Ward 6-10-4 R Thornton 94
17 0222 ZAHAALIE 14 (G) J Pickering 7-10-0 Gary Lyons 108
18 P-00 GLEVUM 13 N Twiston-Davies 7-10-0 C Llewellyn 115

5-1 Bowles Patrol, 6-1 Allez Wijins, 7-1 Seize The Day, 8-1 Dark Kestrel, 10-1 Sunrise Special, Be Brave, 12-1 Copper Coil, Merilena, Zahaalie, 14-1 others.

4.20 DUCK'S CROSS NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE (Amateurs: £1,298: 3m) (9)

1 F11- RED REBEL 281 (D,G,S) T Walford 7-12-4 Mr N Wilson 23
2 12-1 BALLYALLIA CASTLE 11P (D,F,G,S) Mrs J Read 10-12-0 Mr T Lane (7) [45]
3 /P0- DANDE DOVE 294 A Deakin 8-12-0 Mr G Hanmer (5) –
4 1/1/ GUITING GRAY 705P (D,F,G,S) Mrs C Bailey 12-12-0 Mr B Pollock –
5 13P- LAKESIDE LAD 262 (D,S) S R Griffiths 7-12-0 Mr A Dalton (7) –
6 0403 LAURA LUGS 138 Mrs M Hambro 7-12-0 Mr N Fehily (5) 35
7 130/ MARCHING MARQUIS 701 (F,S) G Brown 8-12-0 Mr T Gibney (3) –
8 P1-U TRUE CHIMES 25P (G) H G Owen 8-12-0 Mr J Owen (7) –
9 3U6- REGAL PURSUIT 330 (F) Mrs J Fitzgerald 8-11-9 Mr A White (3) 24

6-4 Red Rebel, 9-4 Guiting Gray, 7-2 Ballyallia Castle, 12-1 Regal Pursuit, 14-1 Marching Marquis, 16-1 Laura Lugs, 33-1 Dande Dove, Lakeside Lad, True Chimes.

4.50 LONG STANTON HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,921: 2m 110yd) (7)

1 -316 CLASSIC EAGLE 47 (CD,F,G) Mrs D Haine 6-11-11 G Bradley 104
2 1124 NESSUN DORO 33 (D,S) S Mellor 7-11-10 C Webb 103
3 3316 HAL HOO YAROOM 71 (BF,F,S) J Jenkins 6-10-13 J Osborne 105
4 /41- SUNLEY SECURE 423 (S) N Chance 6-10-7 S Durack –
5 460- TUKANO 442 (D,F) J Jenkins 8-10-7 M Griffiths (5) –
6 -5P3 RING OF VISION 13F (D,F) J J Quinn 7-10-6 L Wyer [117]
7 1-46 JANGLYNYVE 28 (D,F) Mrs M Jones 5-10-0 A Maguire 90

5-2 Classic Eagle, 11-4 Nessun Doro, 4-1 Ring Of Vision, 5-1 Hal Hoo Yaroom, 7-1 Sunley Secure, 12-1 Tukano, 25-1 Janglynyve.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Wolverhampton

Going: standard

2.10 (1m 4f) 1, **Crash Call Lady** (N Carlisle, 20-1), 2, Order In Court (20-1), 3, Lucky Touch (10-11 fav) 7 ran. NR: Nadisha. 3l, 13l. C Allen. Tote: £22.80; £5.80, £8.60. DF: £37.00. CSF: £297.73.

2.40 (6f) 1, **Garnock Valley** (G Carter, 13-8 fav), 2, Mike's Double (3-1); 3, Little Ibnr (11-2). 9 ran. 3l, 2½l. J Berry. Tote: £2.70; £1.10, £1.50, £1.40. DF: £5.20. CSF: £6.66.

3.10 (1m 100yd) 1, **Westman's Weigh** (J P Spencer, 9-2); 2, Italian Symphony (14-1); 3, Pas de Memores (7-2). Lycian (5th) 2-1 fav. 7 ran. ½l, 2½l. R Hollinshead. Tote: £6.90; £2.60, £2.50. DF: £27.50. CSF: £58.67.

3.40 (6f) 1, **Chaluz** (D Sweeney, 4-1), 2, Strat's Quest (4-1), 3, Principal Boy (33-1). Intiaash (5th) 6-4 fav. 8 ran. 1¼l, 2l. K Burke. Tote: £4.70; £1.30, £1.10, £4.30. DF: £13.60. CSF: £19.06.

4.10 (1m 4f) 1, **Lysandros** (J D Smith, 4-5 fav), 2, Failed To Hit (10-1); 3, Noukari (5-1). 8 ran. 4l, 8l. Noel T Chance. Tote: £1.70; £1.10, £2.30, £1.70. DF: £8.50. CSF: £11.34. Tricast: £29.76.

4.40 (5f) 1, **Sand Storm** (G Hannon, 14-1), 2, Dispol Clan (3-1), 3, Dolly Day Dream (7-1). Ladycake 5-2 fav. 7 ran. NR: Nicholas Mistress. Hd, sh hd. B Meehan. Tote: £13.90; £4.60, £1.90. DF: £41.10. CSF: £55.11.

5.10 (7f) 1, **Prideway** (J Bosley, 5-1), 2, State Wind (14-1), 3, Tinna's Pet (10-1). James Dee 9-4 fav. 9 ran. Nk, 3½l. A Bailey. Tote: £6.00; £2.10, £4.10, £2.10. DF: £34.80. Tote Trifecta: £889.10. CSF: £72.24. Tricast: £639.91.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £12,518.02 carried forward to Lingfield Park today).

Placepot: £2,303.50. Quadpot: £94.10.

☐ **Chepstow and Ludlow abandoned because of frost.**

☐ Coral yesterday opened a book on the Weatherbys Champion Bumper at the Cheltenham Festival. It bets: 8-1 Youlneverwalkalone, 10-1 Give It Holly, Golden Alpha, 12-1 Devil's Advocate, 14-1 Mr Lamb, 16-1 Red Morocco, Billywill, Ingonish, 20-1 bar.

Tongue straps to be declared

THE Jockey Club aims to introduce the overnight declaration of tongue straps in April. Meanwhile, trainers intending to tie a horse's tongue down for a race must continue to inform the declarations' clerk on the day of racing. This information will be made known on racecourses and in betting shops.

Malcolm Wallace, the Jockey Club's Director of Regulation, said: "Many horses do show improved form with tongue straps and this information should be given to the betting public in advance."



SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Often refusing to overruff will strengthen your trump holding. This example is from the 1998 BBL Premier League.

Dealer North **Love all** **IMPs**

North: ♠ K 10 9 6 4 3 ♡ J 9 3 ◇ 10 7 ♣ 9 7
West: ♠ J ♡ A K 10 6 ◇ 9 8 2 ♣ A 6 5 3 2
East: ♠ Q 8 7 5 2 ♡ Q 7 ◇ Q 4 3 ♣ J 10 4
South: ♠ A ♡ 8 5 4 2 ◇ A K J 6 5 ♣ K Q 8

Contract: Two Spades Doubled, by South. Lead: ace of hearts.

North opened a "multi-coloured" Two Diamonds, showing a Weak Two in one of the majors. South replied Two Spades, saying that was where he wanted to play if North had spades – clearly the bid implies some heart support, as if North had hearts, they would have to play in at least Three Hearts. West doubled Two Spades for take-out, and East had little choice but to make a penalty pass.

The defence began with ace, king and six of hearts, East ruffing the third round and returning the jack of clubs. West took declarer's king with the ace and played the ten of hearts. Declarer ruffed in dummy with the nine, and Gunnar Hallberg (East) made the good play of discarding a club. If he overruffs with the queen of spades his remaining three trumps fall under the ace, king and nine. But after his discard he held Q875 of spades over dummy's K10643, a holding worth two tricks unless declarer could organise an endplay.

Declarer took the ace of spades, and then played off the ace and king of diamonds. On the second diamond Hallberg followed with the queen. So declarer attempted to enter dummy with a club ruff; East overruffed and exited with a diamond, later scoring one more trump trick to beat the contract.

What had declarer missed? It was that East, if he had Qx of diamonds and four clubs, would certainly have discarded a diamond on the ten of hearts. If declarer draws that inference, he can ruff a third round of diamonds low in dummy. That leaves a three-card ending with dummy and East holding nothing but trumps; declarer exits with a low trump, forcing East to give up his second trump trick in the two-card ending.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

BULLI
a. Corned beef
b. A parrot tulip bulb
c. A type of soil

DVORNIK
a. A hooligan
b. A vodka aperitif
c. A porter

GILLION
a. A billion
b. A kitchen maid
c. A small barrel

ANGAREB
a. An Ethiopian language
b. A type of spider
c. A bedstead

Answers on page 46

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

A hundred years ago

1999 is the centenary of one great tournaments of all time — the competition held at London 1899 won overwhelmingly by Emanuel Lasker, the world champion, ahead of most of his leading rivals of the day.

Recent research has revealed that in games against the elite Lasker was the most successful with the black pieces. Here are the leading percentages, calculated by Professor Nathan Divinsky of top players against elite grandmasters only playing black: Lasker 62.8; Morphy 62.5; Kasparov 58.7; Capablanca 57; Fischer 55.5; Alekhine 52.9.

Today, in commemoration of Lasker's victory a hundred years ago, I give one of his wins against a powerful Russian opponent from the London 1899 tournament.

White: Mikhail Chigorin
Black: Emanuel Lasker
London 1899

French Defence

1	e4	e6
2	Qe2	Nc6
3	Nc3	e5
4	g3	Nf6
5	Bg2	Bc5
6	d3	d6
7	Bg5	h6
8	Bxf6	Qxf6
9	Nd5	Qd8
10	c3	Ne7
11	Nxe7	Qxe7
12	0-0-0	Bd7
13	f4	0-0-0
14	Nf3	Bb6
15	Rhf1	f6
16	Kb1	Rhe8
17	f5	Ba4
18	Rc1	Kb8
19	Nd2	a6
20	Bf3	Ba7
21	h4	Rc8
22	Nc4	Red8
23	Ne3	Be8
24	Rfd1	Bf7
25	c4	c6
26	Rc2	Bd4
27	Rdc1	Qc7
28	Nd1	Qa5
29	Nc3	b5
30	b3	Rd7
31	cxb5	axb5
32	Nd5	Kb7
33	g4	Rdd8
34	Ne7	Bxb3
35	Nxc8	Rxc8
36	Qd2	Qa3
37	Rh1	Ra8
38	Rh2	Bxa2+
39	Rxa2	Qb3+
40	Kc1	Rxa2
41	Qxa2	Be3+
42	Qd2	Qxd3

White resigns

Diagram of final position

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

Times book

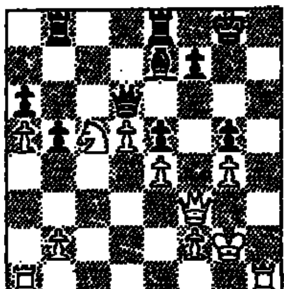
The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01797 369966 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Bacrot — Gallego, Andorra, 1998.

White's next move was a clever coup which cut off the black defences from his kingside and enabled White to mount a checkmating attack. What did he play?



Solution on page 46

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
2.00 Philosophic 3.30 Baajil
2.30 Keepsake 4.00 Golconda
3.00 Rise 'N Shine 4.30 Malchik

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.00 SQUIRE CORRIE.

GOING: STANDARD TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST SIS

2.00 RED ROSE AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP (£2,722: 1m 5f) (12 runners)

101 (3) 20-360 PHILOSOPHIC 2 (CD,F) (Gallagher Equine) Mrs L Jewell 5-11-7 Mr P O'Keeffe (5) 52
102 (5) /0006/ THE FRENCH FURZE 257J (BF) (J Ennis) R Peacock 5-10-12 Mrs C Peacock (5) –
103 (1) 634-04 TIME CAN TELL 22 (CD,G) (A Price) A Juckes 5-10-7 A Evans (3) 44
104 (9) 0000-6 DENTARDIA 23 (C Curtis) J Eustace 4-10-3 Miss J Rees (7) 56
105 (6) 343610 EVEZIO RUFO 13 (B,CD,S) (O Gunter) N Littmoden 7-9-11 O Gunter (7) 52
106 (10) 00025- PREMIER LEAGUE 43 (F,G,S) K Cunningham-Brown 9-9-10 V Lukaniuk (3) 51
107 (2) 004-65 FOURDANED 14 (N Bedward) B Johnson 6-9-8 Mrs K Hills (7) 67
108 (7) 1565-5 NOSEY NATIVE 33 (F,S) (Mrs L Pearce) J Pearce 6-9-5 Mrs L Pearce 58
109 (12) 002-00 KPOLO 5 (Miss J Reeves) B Johnson 4-9-4 G A P Lewars (7) 50
110 (8) 00-000 GREEN JACKET 9 (B) (J Joseph) R O'Sullivan 4-9-3 Miss B Fisher (7) [60]
111 (11) 0300-0 SOVIET LADY 9 (G) (G Boyer) R Ingram 5-9-3 R Guest (5) 54
112 (4) 000/46 BIGWIG 9 (B) (Mrs E Iveman) G L Moore 6-9-3 I Mongan (3) 38

Long handicap: Green Jacket 8-13, Soviet Lady 8-10, Bigwig 8-5

BETTING: 7-2 Time Can Tell, 9-2 Philosophic, Evezio Rufo, 6-1 Premier League, 7-1 Nosey Native, 10-1 Kpolo, 14-1 The French Furze, Fourdaned, 16-1 others.

1998: PALISANDER 4-10-7 R Guest (8-1) S Dow 13 ran

FORM FOCUS: Philosophic 13l 7th of 13 to Harik in handicap at Lingfield (2m, AW, equitrack); previously 15l 6th of 9 to Royal Roulette in handicap at Lingfield (2m, AW, equitrack). The French Furze 29l last of 6 to King Of Persia in 3yo maiden stakes at Curragh (1m 2f, good to soft). Time Can Tell 8¼l 4th of 9 to Abuljjood in claiming stakes at Wolverhampton (1m 4f, AW, fibresand), previously 26l 7th of 10 to Turnill House in handicap at Southwell (2m, AW, fibresand). Dentardia 15l 6th of 8 to Bank On Him in handicap at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, equitrack). Evezio Rufo 16l 11th of 12 to Vincent in amateur handicap at Southwell (1m 4f, AW, fibresand), previously beat Infamous 1½l in 11-runner selling stakes at Wolverhampton (1m 6f 166yd, AW, fibresand). Premier League 15l 5th of 9 to Royal Roulette in handicap at Lingfield (2m, AW, equitrack), previously 3½l 2nd of 17 to Bon Guest in claiming stakes at Lingfield (1m 4f, AW, equitrack) with Evezio Rufo (1lb worse off) 8l 6th. Fourdaned 11l 5th of 13 to Caernarfon Bay in amateur handicap at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, equitrack) with Green Jacket (2lb better off) 15l 8th. Nosey Native 8½l 5th of 8 to Paradise Navy in amateur handicap at Lingfield (2m, AW, equitrack); previously 3½l 5th of 15 to Paradise Navy in amateur handicap at Southwell (1m 6f, AW, fibresand) with Evezio Rufo (4lb worse off) 4½l 6th. Kpolo 45l 7th of 8 to Muhandis in selling handicap at Lingfield (1m 5f, AW, equitrack). Green Jacket 13l 8th of 9 to Melomania in amateur handicap at Lingfield (1m, AW, equitrack). Soviet Lady 26l 7th of 8 to Orsay in claiming stakes at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, equitrack). Bigwig 3½l 6th of 11 to Half Tide in handicap at Lingfield (1m 4f, AW, equitrack).

EVEZIO RUFO disappointed after winning at Wolverhampton last month but has claims at his best

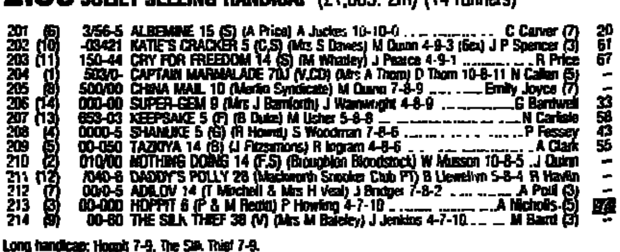
2.30 JULIET SELLING HANDICAP (£1,883: 2m) (14 runners)

201 (6) 3/56-5 ALBEMINE 15 (S) (A Price) A Juckes 10-10-0 C Carver (7) 20
202 (10) -03421 KATIE'S CRACKER 5 (C,S) (Mrs S Dawes) M Quinn 4-9-3 (6ex) J P Spencer (3) 61
203 (11) 150-44 CRY FOR FREEDOM 14 (S) (M Whatley) J Pearce 4-9-1 R Price 67
204 (1) 503/0- CAPTAIN MARMALADE 70J (V,CD) (Mrs A Thorn) D Thom 10-8-11 N Callan (5) –
205 (8) 500/00 CHINA MAIL 10 (Merlin Syndicate) M Quinn 7-8-9 Emily Joyce (7) –
206 (14) 000-00 SUPER-GEM 9 (Mrs J Bamforth) J Wainwright 4-8-9 G Bardwell 33
207 (13) 658-03 KEEPSAKE 5 (F) (B Duke) M Usher 5-8-8 N Carlisle 58
208 (4) 0000-5 SHANUKE 5 (G) (R Howitt) S Woodman 7-8-6 P Fessey 43
209 (5) 00-050 TAZKIYA 14 (B) (J Fitzsimons) R Ingram 4-8-6 A Clark 55
210 (2) 010/00 NOTHING DOING 14 (F,S) (Broughton Bloodstock) W Musson 10-8-5 J Quinn –
211 (12) /040-6 DADDY'S POLLY 28 (Mackworth Snooker Club PT) B Llewellyn 5-8-4 R Havlin –
212 (7) 00/0-5 ADILOV 14 (T Mitchell & Mrs H Veal) J Bridger 7-8-2 A Polli (3) –
213 (3) 00-000 HOPPIT 8 (P & M Reddi) P Howling 4-7-10 A Nicholls (5) [72]
214 (9) 00-60 THE SILK THIEF 38 (V) (Mrs M Baldey) J Jenkins 4-7-10 M Baird (3) –

Long handicap: Hoppit 7-9, The Silk Thief 7-9.

BETTING: 2-1 Katie's Cracker, 3-1 Albemine, 6-1 Keepsake, 7-1 Cry For Freedom, 12-1 Super-Gem, Shanuke, 20-1 Tazkiya, Daddy's Polly, Adilov, 25-1 others.

1998: COASTGUARDS HERO 5-9-5 J Marshall (3-1 fav) M Usher 9 ran



FORM FOCUS: Albemine 12l 5th of 11 to Evezio Rufo in selling stakes at Wolverhampton (1m 6f 166yd, AW, fibresand), previously 45l 6th of 9 to Brynkir in handicap at Wolverhampton (2m 46yd, AW, fibresand). Katie's Cracker beat Modest Hope 2½l in 10-runner selling handicap at Lingfield (1m 5f, AW, equitrack); previously 3½l 2nd of 16 to Muhandis in selling handicap at Lingfield (1m 5f, AW, equitrack) with Cry For Freedom (12lb better off) 19l 4th, Adilov (12lb better off) 20l 5th, Tazkiya (11lb better off) 32l 11th and Nothing Doing (13lb better off) 33l 12th. Captain Marmalade 39l 8th of 11 to Count De Money in amateur handicap at Southwell (1m 4f, AW, fibresand), previously 4½l 3rd of 14 to Fighting Times in selling handicap at Nottingham (1m 1f 213yd, good). China Mail 57l 7th of 9 to Quezon City in handicap at Southwell (2m, AW, fibresand). Super-Gem 6½l 7th of 11 to Half Tide in handicap at Lingfield (1m 4f, AW, equitrack), previously 22l 8th of 10 to Whatever's Right in handicap at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, equitrack). Keepsake 16l 3rd of 8 to Muhandis in selling handicap at Lingfield (1m 5f, AW, equitrack) with Shanuke (1lb better off) 29l 5th. Daddy's Polly 25l 6th of 11 to Spick And Span in handicap at Lingfield (2m, AW, equitrack). Hoppit 54l 12th of 14 to Zaha in maiden auction stakes at Southwell (1m 3f, AW, fibresand). The Silk Thief 42l 7th of 8 to Laa Jadeed in apprentice maiden stakes at Southwell (1m 3f, AW, fibresand).

KATIE'S CRACKER can defy a 6lb penalty for her victory in a similar race on Saturday

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
D Chapman	21	113	18.6	R Guest	3	11	27.3
M Johnston	49	276	17.8	P Fitzsimons	3	16	18.8
V Soane	8	47	17.0	J Fanning	9	53	17.0
M Bell	16	95	16.8	W Ryan	43	263	16.3
J Eustace	5	31	16.1	A Culhane	18	111	16.2
B Hills	11	72	15.3	R Cochrane	54	346	15.6

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Huntingdon: 2.20 Renardine Boy. Lingfield Park: 2.30 Tazkiya.

3.00 CASANOVA HANDICAP (£2,558: 5f) (7 runners)

301 (3) 03-501 SQUIRE CORRIE 7 (B,CD,F,G,S) (J Chapman) D Chapman 7-10-3 (6ex) A Culhane [80]
302 (4) -43213 HALF TONE 7 (B,BF,CD,F,G,S) (Mrs G Temmerman) R Flower 7-10-0 Dane O'Neill 77
303 (2) 03-221 SOTONIAN 15 (D) (T Dean) P Felgate 6-9-12 A Nicholls (5) 72
304 (6) 00-642 HEAVENLY MISS 14 (CD,F) (T Mitchell) J Bridger 5-9-4 N Carlisle 70
305 (1) 06-002 RISE 'N SHINE 7 (B,CD) (R Cyzer) C Cyzer 5-8-11 G Faulkner (3) 76
306 (5) 0504-6 BOWCLIFFE GRANGE 15 (D,F,G) (D Chapman) D Chapman 7-8-10 J Fanning 71
307 (7) 2-6662 DANCING JACK 19 (CD) (Mrs J Stamp) J Bridger 6-8-3 R Brisland (7) 77

BETTING: 3-1 Squire Corrie, 7-2 Rise N'Shine, Half Tone, 5-1 Bowcliffe Grange, 6-1 Sotonian, 7-1 Dancing Jack, 12-1 Heavenly Miss.

1998: RISE 'N SHINE 4-8-5 R French (10-3) C Cyzer 10 ran

FORM FOCUS: Squire Corrie beat Rise 'N Shine (6lb better off) 1¼l in 10-runner handicap at Lingfield (5f, AW, standard) with Half Tone (6lb better off) 1¾l 3rd. Sotonian beat Silk Cottage 1¼l in 8-runner handicap at Wolverhampton (5f, AW, fibresand) with Bowcliffe Grange (10lb better off) 7¼l 6th. Heavenly Miss 1¾l 2nd of 10 to Palacegate Touch in claiming stakes at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack), previously 11l 4th of 6 to Anokato in claiming stakes at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack). Dancing Jack neck 2nd of 10 to Half Tone (2lb worse off) in handicap at Lingfield (5f, AW, equitrack) with Rise 'N Shine (7lb better off) 3½l 8th, previously 5½l 6th of 9 to Another Nightmare in handicap at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack) with Squire Corrie (levels) 11l last.

Adrian Nicholls is good value for his claim and SOTONIAN looks an able partner

3.30 SAY IT WITH ROSES MAIDEN STAKES (£3,539: 1m 2f) (6 runners)

401 (4) 330 BRUFF STREAM 5 (BF) (J Keaney) M Johnston 5-9-12 J Fanning 48
402 (1) 3/ HIBERNATE 41J (Cragside Contractors (NI)) K Burke 5-9-12 N Callan (5) –
403 (2) 000- APPROACHABLE 122 (J Mills) R Phillips 4-9-11 R Perham 41
404 (5) 354-22 BAAJIL 7 (Crown Pig & Malting Svs Ltd) D Cosgrove 4-9-11 P Fitzsimons (7) 54
405 (3) 05- KIND SIR 121 (A Shead) B Hills 3-8-4 A Eddery (5) [71]
406 (6) MISCHIEF (H R H Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 3-8-4 C Rutter –

BETTING: 5-4 Mischief, 7-4 Kind Sir, 6-1 Bruff Stream, 7-1 Baajil, 33-1 Hibernate, Approachable.

1998: HARIK 4-9-10 M Wigham (11-1) G L Moore 10 ran

FORM FOCUS: Bruff Stream 34l 9th of 12 to Magic Arrow in maiden stakes at Lingfield (1m 4f, AW, equitrack); previously 3½l 3rd of 9 to Magical Shot in maiden stakes at Wolverhampton (1m 100yd, AW, fibresand). Hibernate 1½l 3rd of 9 to Home Alone in 2yo maiden stakes at Goodwood (1m, good). Approachable 29l 12th of 19 to Oara Kite in 3yo maiden apprentice stakes at Leicester (7f 9yd, good to soft). Baajil 10l 2nd of 8 to Kennet in maiden stakes at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, standard), previously 3½l 2nd of 8 to Hormuz in maiden stakes at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, equitrack). Kind Sir 6½l 5th of 20 to Dollar Law in 2yo maiden stakes at Leicester (1m 8yd, good to soft), previously 12l 7th of 17 to Peace Of Mind in 2yo maiden stakes at Kempton (1m, good). Mischief Generous colt, half brother to the classy Rivadian

KIND SIR showed promise in two starts last year and can improve further upped in trip

4.00 ROMEO MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN FILLIES STAKES (3-Y-O: £1,970: 7f) (6 runners)

501 (5) 3-3 BLUEWATER BAY 15 (Kai Tak Racing) J Eustace 8-11 J Tate 56
502 (6) 006-22 COMPTON AKKA 12 (E Penser) G A Butler 8-11 J Quinn 50
503 (2) 0- DOCKLANDS MERC 280 (Mrs L Olley) R Phillips 8-11 M Tebbutt –
504 (3) 30- GOLCONDA 138 (Innlaw Racing) M Bell 8-11 W Ryan 58
505 (4) 0- MUMMY NOSE BEST 283 (Fillies Fanciers) V Soane 8-11 R Cochrane 34
506 (1) 00500- TICK N PICK 66 (B Scott) B Johnson 8-11 R FitzPatrick (5) [60]

BETTING: 6-4 Bluewater Bay, Golconda, 3-1 Compton Akka, 25-1 Mummy Nose Best, 33-1 others.

1998: HEVERGOLF PRINCESS 8-11 D Holland (5-4 jt fav) T Naughton 5 ran

FORM FOCUS: Bluewater Bay 1½l 3rd of 13 to Dryad in maiden stakes at Wolverhampton (6f, AW, fibresand), previously 6½l 3rd of 6 to Prince Prospect in 2yo maiden stakes at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack). Compton Akka 1½l 2nd of 9 to Bratby in 3yo apprentice handicap at Lingfield (1m, AW, equitrack), previously 5l 2nd of 12 to Royal Preview in 3yo fillies handicap at Lingfield (7f, AW, equitrack). Docklands Merc 23l last of 10 to Damalis in 2yo maiden fillies at Chester (5f 16yd, good to firm). Golconda 18l last of 8 to Subito in 2yo fillies stakes at Ascot (7f, good); previously neck 3rd of 19 to La Paola in 2yo maiden auction stakes at Sandown (5f 6yd, good to soft). Mummy Nose Best 8½l 7th of 17 to Eweney in 2yo maiden fillies at Warwick (5f, good). Tick N Pick 18l 7th of 10 to Flying Officer in 2yo maiden auction stakes at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack).

GOLCONDA ran well first time up last season before being highly tried at Ascot

4.30 SEALED WITH A LOVING KISS HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £2,571: 1m) (4 runners)

601 (4) 0-1112 ROYAL PREVIEW 2 (BF,C) (Sir Peter Davis) M Bell 9-13 (6ex) C Carver (7) 57
602 (3) 114-61 DONE AND DUSTED 7 (C) (P Skinner) R Brotherton 9-7 (6ex) P Bradley (7) 58
603 (2) 01-165 DREAM ON ME 16 (CD) (M Barrett) G L Moore 9-0 J Fanning 52
604 (1) 3-3243 MALCHIK 16 (D,S) (I Mirzolan) P Howling 8-0 J Quinn [65]

BETTING: 11-10 Royal Preview, 9-4 Done And Dusted, 9-2 Malchik, 7-1 Dream On Me

1998: GENIUS 9-6 P Doe (9-4 fav) S Dow 11 ran

FORM FOCUS: Royal Preview neck 2nd of 7 to Nicholas Mistress in 3yo handicap at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack), previously beat Indian Swinger 7l in 9-runner 3yo handicap at Wolverhampton (6f, AW, fibresand). Done And Dusted beat Diamond Geezer 1¼l in 11-runner 3yo handicap at Lingfield (7f, AW, standard), previously 3l 6th of 9 to Royal Preview (8lb worse off) in 3yo handicap at Southwell (6f, AW, fibresand). Dream On Me 7½l 5th of 10 to Diamond Geezer in 3yo handicap at Lingfield (6f, AW, equitrack); previously 10l 6th of 12 to Royal Preview (21lb worse off) in 3yo fillies handicap at Lingfield (7f, AW, equitrack). Malchik 4¾l 3rd of 11 to Tragic Dancer in 3yo handicap at Lingfield (1m 2f, AW, equitrack).

ROYAL PREVIEW has a chance to bounce back after her winning sequence was broken on Tuesday

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: BIGWIG (2.00 Lingfield Park) Gary Moore's runner performed respectably from out of the handicap nine days ago and should appreciate today's drop in class and longer trip. Nb: Royal Preview (4.30 Lingfield Park)

CRICKET

England bowlers build on Read's solid foundations

FROM THRASY PETROPOULOS IN BULAWAYO

BULAWAYO (second day of five): Zimbabwe A, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are 289 runs behind England A

UNDAUNTED by the prospect of a lifeless pitch and stifling conditions at Queens Sports Club, England A showed commendable spirit to bring the second international match here to life.

Frustrated, perhaps, by the batsmen's inability to make the most of a solid platform, the bowlers reduced Zimbabwe A to 94 for four in a lively final session, still 90 runs short of avoiding the follow-on.

With Vikram Solanki suffering from a stiff neck after being hit by a stray cricket ball after close of play on the first day, England A's fortunes depended largely on Mal Loye. Unbeaten on 122 overnight, Loye, however, could only add 11 runs to his score before shouldering arms to Guy Whittall and falling leg-before.

Though inhibited in his movement, Solanki showed an impressive range of strokes in his half-century. One moment of desperation cost him his wicket, when he swung Andy Whittall to mid-wicket.

As before on this tour, Graeme Swann batted with fluency and aggression but holed out looking to clear the infield. The tail now exposed, much of the attritional accumulation of the previous day had been wasted and it was to Chris Read's credit that a total approaching 400 was eventually reached.

Sometimes impish, always entertaining, Read's innings of 47 did as much for his reputation as it did for his side's position in the match. After being dropped a place in the order to No 8, his response revealed both character and ability.

England A's bowlers then set about consolidating on the newly gained momentum, at one stage taking three Zimbabwe A wickets for one run, Dean Cosker dismissing both Craig Wishart and Whittall and a decidedly sharp Steve Harmison having Trevor Madondo caught in the gully.

ENGLAND A: First Innings

D L Maddy c Blignaut b A R Whittall	64
*M P Vaughan c A R Whittall b Strang	0
M B Loye lbw b G J Whittall	133
R W T Key c Madondo b Strang	23
A Flintoff b A R Whittall	2
V S Solanki c Carlisle b A R Whittall	65
G P Swann c Madondo b A R Whittall	24
† C M W Read c Gripper b Strang	47
D A Cosker c Gurr b G J Whittall	11
J D Lewry c Gurr b Strang	1
S J Harmison not out	0
Extras (b 2, lb 5, nb 6)	13
Total	383

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-12, 2-134, 3-178, 4-189, 5-270, 6-313, 7-326, 8-361, 9-374

BOWLING. Blignaut 20-4-62-0; Strang 37.2-12-107-4; G J Whittall 16-6-33-2; A R Whittall 36-6-88-4, Huckle 35-12-80-0, Viljoen 3-0-6-0

ZIMBABWE A: First Innings

T R Gripper c Read b Flintoff	12
C B Wishart lbw b Cosker	34
T N Madondo c Swann b Harmison	5
G J Whittall b Cosker	0
S V Carlisle not out	18
D P Viljoen not out	20
Extras (lb 2, nb 3)	5
Total (4 wkts)	94

FALL OF WICKETS 1-38, 2-54, 3-55, 4-55

BOWLING: Lewry 13-6-28-0; Harmison 9-3-16-1; Flintoff 8-4-13-1; Cosker 9-2-20-2; Swann 2-0-15-0.

Umpires: G R Evans and E J Gilmour

Defiant Papps gives New Zealand edge

FROM JOHN STERN IN WELLINGTON

WELLINGTON (third day of four): New Zealand Under-19, with four second-innings wickets in hand, are 192 runs ahead of England Under-19

BY THE end of this three-match series, the England Under-19 bowlers may be weary of seeing the name of Michael Papps on the scoreboard. In fact, they probably already are.

Papps, a short, compact opening bat from Canterbury, completed his second century in consecutive internationals yesterday and again turned the game marginally back in favour of New Zealand. In the first match at New Plymouth, he made a dour 64 in the first innings and then a more aggressive 117 in the second.

Having made a duck on the first morning of this match, he dropped anchor again in the second innings, batting for more than seven hours to make an invaluable 127.

Papps and Tim McIntosh put on 144 for the first wicket before McIntosh played across the line to Giles Haywood and was leg-before. Tucker took the second wicket of the day when Brad Patton cut and was caught behind, though Tucker's involvement in proceedings was soon terminated.

Both he and Bulbeck, the two Somerset members of the tour party, limped off in mid-afternoon. Bulbeck had problems with his left ankle and Tucker broke down during an over holding his knee.

The loss of two seamers left Michael Gough, the England captain, little choice but to bowl his spinners. Graeme Bridge, the slow left-armer and a Durham team-mate of Gough, took three wickets in the final hour, including that of Papps, who was leg-before. England lead 1-0 in the series.

Scoreboard, page 45

MIKE HEWITT / ALLSPORT



Pirie's outstanding performance in Vail has left her considering competing on the downhill circuit next season

Britain's youth learning fast

Graham Duffill sees the country's hopes for the future show strength on the slopes

The world championships get under way in earnest for the Great Britain team in Vail today, with five racers competing in the final four technical events.

Tessa Pirie's thirteenth place in the women's combined is Britain's best result from the first week and the 20-year-old student will compete in the giant slalom today.

It is more than ten years since Britain had a woman downhiller and with Amanda, her 18-year-old sister, taking a thirtieth place at the French junior championships, the Pirie sisters could soon become a female replacement for the Bell brothers.

"I went into the downhill with a clear mind, none of that 'I'm from a small nation stuff', because I know I am capable of it," Tessa Pirie said. "The safest way to race is to attack the course and I attacked it big time. It was fast and I got big air off the jumps but I felt in control."

Britain's only male downhiller after the retirement of Graham and Martin Bell is Andrew Freshwater, 25, who came 24th in the downhill but was one of the later starters hampered by fresh snow.

The women's giant slalom today will see the debut of Chemmy Alcott, 16, alongside Emma Carrick-Anderson, who finished in eleventh place in the slalom in the last world championship in Sestriere, Italy. Carrick-Anderson, 23, is travelling and training with the Finland team, which is restoring her mental strength after a wearing ten-month tour alone last season.

"Last season was horrible, I was lonely," she said. "Training with he Finnish team has made such a difference. At the beginning of the season I didn't have any complications, I was just going for it and when I think I can be up there with these guys, things go my way. I qualified fourteenth for the first World Cup from a start number of 60 and that proved to me that I can still do it after Sestriere."

Alcott has the distinction of being ranked second in the world for her age in giant slalom and third in the slalom. Last season she won the Continental Cup series in Australasia, the youngest skier to do so and the first Briton.

Alan Baxter, who will race in the giant slalom and slalom, has been training with the Finnish men and says he is skiing better than ever before. Baxter's world ranking has leapt from No 540 two years ago to 87 and he began the season with a 32nd place in the slalom in Park City. Baxter has been preparing for the world championship by dropping to the lowest-level circuit and competing in International Ski Federation (FIS) races. "I had a bit of a negative attitude after not qualifying in the top 30 in so many World Cups so I did some FIS races to get my head prepared," he said. "I was skiing technically well but not fast enough."

In the giant slalom, Ross Green will face Benjamin Raich, a former racing companion and one of the favourites. Green compared his fortunes with those of the Austrian. "The first time I raced against Benny Raich he won and I finished tenth, but I was a lot closer to him than I am now. Since then he has probably made about a million pounds and has bought his own piste at home that he trains on. I have made about £800."

Green's experience highlights how money and developing a youth team could turn the fortunes of British skiing around. "One of the biggest achievements has been getting the British junior team up and running again after a long gap," Mike Jardine, chief executive of the British Ski Federation, said. "For the last five or six years we have been arguing for a junior team and we are beginning to see the benefits of it now."

SNOOKER

Wembley crowd left wanting more

BY PHIL YATES

SLOW hand-clapping and concerted booing broke out at the Wembley Conference Centre yesterday when the crowd was denied the opportunity of witnessing the end of the second-round match between Peter Ebdon and Mark King at the Benson and Hedges Masters.

With Ebdon leading 5-4, and one frame away from a quarter-final against John Higgins, play was suspended in order to allow Ronnie O'Sullivan and James Wattana to begin their contest on time.

The suspension, at 5.55pm, some 50 minutes before O'Sullivan and Wattana were due to enter the arena, was only the third such occurrence in the 25-history of the event. It was unpopular with the crowd of 719 and the players alike.

"This is a bad decision," Ebdon said, on being informed of the news by Alan Chamberlain, the referee. King's aggrieved expression and body language left no doubt that he agreed.

The exchanges, although far from fluent, could not be described as tortuously slow. Failure to concede in a series of frames when an unlikely number of snookers were required, and regular toilet breaks between frames, had contributed to the problem.

King, who had prevailed in only one of his five matches this season before he edged out Jimmy White 6-5 on the pink in the wild-card play-off round on Sunday, recovered from a 2-0 deficit to lead 3-2 before Ebdon found his range.

Ebdon regained the advantage at 4-3, King won a scrappy eighth frame, but Ebdon claimed a low-scoring ninth.

The silver anniversary celebration of the Masters will feature a parade of former champions before the concluding session of the final on Sunday. Only Alex Higgins and John Spencer, because of ill-health, and Doug Mountjoy, who is coaching in the United Arab Emirates, will be absent.

RUGBY UNION

Problems pile up for Yates on two fronts

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

THE playing career of Kevin Yates, already damaged by an ear-biting controversy last year, could go into irretrievable decline if a charge of stamping is proved against him. Yates, the Bath loose-head prop capped twice by England during 1997, has been cited by Wasps after an incident during the Allied Dunbar Premiership match at Loftus Road on Sunday.

It is a year to the day since Yates, 26, was found guilty by a Rugby Football Union (RFU) disciplinary panel of biting the ear of Simon Fenn, the London Scottish flanker, during a cup match in January 1998. Though he has consistently pleaded his innocence, he was banned for six months and required to pay costs for the legal procedures, estimated at £23,000.

London Scottish have also claimed that Yates has yet to pay his contribution towards the costs of his legal hearings and have urged a worldwide ban on him until he does. He was required to contribute £10,000 in December and a further £10,000 in June, but Tony Tiarks, the chairman, said: "There was a judgment made, a schedule of costs awarded, but we haven't seen a penny."

Wasps decided to cite Yates after studying video evidence of an incident in the game on Sunday, during which Paul Volley, the Wasps flanker, received a gashed head that required seven stitches. If the case is proved, Yates could face another lengthy suspension and a blow to morale from which he might not recover. He has become accustomed this season to gibes from visiting spectators, reminding him constantly of the ear-biting. Were he to receive a second public condemnation, he might feel that the game was no longer worth the candle.

Bath have stood by him steadily during their collective decline in fortunes, but they would be forced to reconsider the terms of his contract. "We are investigating the claims," Bob Calleja, the Bath general manager, said.

Clive Woodward, the England coach, is prepared to consider Joel Stransky for England's World Cup squad next season. Stransky, the fly half who dropped the goal that won the cup for South Africa against New Zealand in 1995, becomes eligible for England next September. "I would have no problem playing him if he is better than the players we've got," Woodward said.

Meanwhile, the North East has been in a ferment of speculation concerning the future of Newcastle, the 1998 champions. Andy Hindle, the chairman of West Hartlepool, acknowledged that "the idea of a North East super-club is attractive", but his priority is to ensure West's survival in the first division this season.

The timing of Cameron Hall Developments' withdrawal from support of Newcastle has yet to be confirmed, but their 76 per cent shareholding in the club must first be offered to the Newcastle Gosforth Shareholders' Association, which holds the other 24 per cent. "Only then could any serious discussions take place," Hindle said. He emphasised that, in the event of a merger, West would not be willing to participate as a junior partner.

Va'aiga Tuigamala, who was due to play in the Premiership match against Richmond last night before a frozen Kingston Park pitch forced a postponement, has confirmed that he will see out the remaining 3½ years of his contract with Newcastle.

Doddie Weir, the Newcastle lock, will miss the Calcutta Cup match after breaking his ankle during Scotland's win over Wales last weekend. Ireland, who play Wales at Wembley on February 20, have recalled Andy Ward to the squad that lost 10-9 to France.

Dick Best, the director of rugby at London Irish who coached England to their 1992 grand slam, has been added to the selection panel for England A and sevens squads.

IRELAND SQUAD: Backs: C O'Shea (London Irish), J Bishop (London Irish), K Maggs (Bath), J Bell (Dungannon), R Henderson (Wasps), G Dempsey (Terenure College), D Humphreys (Dungannon), E Elwood (Galwegians), C McGuinness (St Mary's College), D Scally (UCD). Forwards: P Clohessy (Young Munster), P Wallace (Saracens), J Fitzpatrick (Dungannon), K Wood (Harlequins), R Nesdale (Newcastle), P Johns (Saracens), J Davidson (Castres), M Galwey (Shannon), E Miller (Terenure College), D O'Cuinneagain (Sale), V Costello (St Mary's College), T Brennan (St Mary's College), A Ward (Ballynahinch)


Yates: stamping charge

Cup organisers facing revolt

By Mark Souster

SECRET talks aimed at establishing an alternative multi-million pound European competition are at an advanced stage and could be implemented if the organisers of the European Cup do not agree to proposals that would allow England back into the existing tournament.

The English and French unions met in London yesterday together with representatives from their leading clubs to finalise a formula that will be submitted to European Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC), the cup organisers. Brian Baister, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) management board, said: "A lot of progress has been made today and I am hopeful that the agreed proposal will lead to the return of English clubs into the European Cup competition."

However, it is understood that the proposition is laden with conditions that ERC is unlikely to countenance. These relate, among other things, to voting rights, distribution of revenue and levels of representation.

The development yesterday emerged in the knowledge that both England and France believe they have a strong fall-back position in the shape of the new pan-European tournament, which they believe would be attractive to Wales, Scotland and Ireland. It would involve up to 24 teams backed by their unions. Each participating side would be assured of £500,000 a year.

"This a properly structured and financially sound proposal which is the most serious proposition yet," one official involved in the negotiations said. "If ERC say no to what England and France want, this proposal moves from the back burner to the front very quickly."

Some English officials distrust French motives, believing they are playing both ends against the middle. It is thought that ERC envisage a 20-strong tournament next year with five teams from both England and France, four from Wales, three from Ireland, two from Scotland and one from Italy. There might be some room for manoeuvre but not enough to meet English demands.

Roberts has made a striking impression for Bristol Rovers as they have progressed in the FA Cup this season

Roberts dreams of triumphant return to his Wembley roots

Russell Kempson talks to a player emerging from a tough background

When Jason Roberts was growing up on the notorious Stonebridge Estate in Park Royal, in the badlands of northwest London, he would savour the matches at nearby Wembley Stadium. He could see the Twin Towers from his bedroom window, hear the roar of the crowd and dream of the day when perhaps he, too, would play at the highest level.

Football kept him out of trouble. Otis Roberts, his uncle, a fringe player with Crystal Palace and Norwich City, taught him the tricks of the trade — be tough, be strong, be cool. "When I was ten, I used to play against all the big men," Roberts said. "They used to kick me terribly, but I loved it. It was great.

"Stonebridge was a bad place, but it was fine for me because all my family were there. We were a tight-knit little community, we knew everyone. I grew there, I'm proud of it and I still go back when I can. It's nice to see some of my old friends."

Wembley is in his sights again. Roberts, 21, will play for Bristol Rovers, the Nationwide League second division side, against Barnsley, of the first division, in the FA Cup fifth round at Oakwell on Saturday. He has scored 15 goals this season, 14 in the past 14 games including six in the Cup, and bubbles with enthusiasm.

He might facially resemble Andy Cole, but there is none of the brooding, surly demeanour of the England and Manchester United striker. Roberts is open, jaunty and possesses a cackling laugh that turns heads in a packed room. He enjoys life and appreciates the opportunities that football is providing for him.

FA CUP

Yet, at 16, when Chelsea decided not to offer him an apprenticeship, the world closed in. His family had moved to Northolt, Middlesex, away from the deprivation of Stonebridge, but the pain of rejection ran deep.

"I lost heart. I didn't want to play any more," he said. "I dropped out. I was disillusioned and my first reaction was to forget all about football. I'd had enough."

Rehabilitation was slow but sure, aided by his family, religion — he prays before every match — and another uncle. Cyrille Regis, the former England player, who is now reserve team manager with West Bromwich Albion. Regis was nearing the end of his playing career, with Wycombe Wanderers, and Roberts combined work as an export clerk for Jaguar with appearances for Hayes. Regis's former club. "Cyrille was a big influence," Roberts said. "He was living with us for about a year and I learnt a lot from him. He was an inspiration. I started enjoying my football again, left my job and trained full-time with Hayes. Then Wolves and Sunderland came in for me."

Roberts chose Wolverhampton Wanderers, moved to Molineux for a fee of £250,000 but became a victim of too many players contesting too few places and the need of Mark McGhee, then the manager, to win matches in a hurry. "I was one for the future," Roberts said. "I was raw. I needed someone to show me, but they didn't really have the time."

Loan stints at Torquay United and Bristol City followed, though the latter ended prematurely when he walked out to pursue an international career with Grenada, a spec at the southernmost tip of the Windward Islands and the birthplace of his father, Reggie. He played in three matches in the Shell Caribbean Cup, scoring five goals, and hopes to return to play in the same competition at the end of this season.

Roberts joined Rovers last summer and has flourished alongside Jamie Cureton, scorer of 17 goals this season, since the departure of Barry Hayles to Fulham in November. The experiences of Stonebridge, Chelsea and Wolves, though tough at the time, have served him well. "It makes me appreciate what I've got now," he said. "You only get certain chances in life and Rovers have given me this chance to prove what I can do. Hopefully, I can take it."

‘Stonebridge was a bad place but I am proud of it’

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

Collymore trains his thoughts on return

ASTON VILLA have told Stan Collymore, their unsettled striker who is having counselling for stress, that he must prove himself on the training ground before he can feature in the first-team plans of John Gregory, the manager.

Collymore had hoped to play against Leeds United next Wednesday, but Gregory said: "If at the end of his counselling period he is in the right frame of mind to come back and play football — which I sincerely hope he will be — then he will come back to work. If he gets his head down and gets on with his work and proves to me that he warrants a place in the first team or on the substitutes' bench or wherever, then he will be given that opportunity."

Collymore has missed Villa's past three games and they have lost them all.

David O'Leary, the Leeds United manager, has moved to strengthen his side by signing Marco Haber, the former Germany international, on trial.

Haber, with two caps and more than 200 Bundesliga appearances to his name with Kaiserslautern and VfB Stuttgart, is apparently unhappy at his present club, Las Palmas. The 27-year-old can play in midfield or at right back.

Sarah Potter.......................42

■ Gary Ablett, the Birmingham City captain, will miss the rest of the season after undergoing surgery to repair knee ligament damage. The 33-year-old defender was injured during the 1-1 draw at Crystal Palace last Saturday.

■ Watford have signed Tony Daley, 31, the former England, Aston Villa and Wolverhampton Wanderers winger, until the end of the season. Daley has played in Watford's past three Nationwide League first division games. Taylor said: "He will be a big asset for us in our remaining games."

■ Robbie Savage, the Wales international, has pledged his future to Leicester City by agreeing a new contract keeping him at Filbert Street until 2001. "Robbie has done better than we hoped after joining us from Crewe," Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, said. "We are delighted to offer him a new contract."

■ Nike has parted ways with the Italian soccer federation (FIGC), the company has announced. In a meeting with financial analysts, Nike officials informed the FIGC that it will no longer sponsor the Italian national teams, a deal that was costing Nike more than £9 million a year.

RFU infighting erupts over handling of redundancies



Not content with its skirmishes with the International Board, the Five Nations and its clubs, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) is now embroiled in a little local difficulty. In the left-hand corner Francis Baron, the new Twickenham chief executive; in the right, Graeme Cattermole, the chairman of the finance committee.

At the meeting of the committee last month, Cattermole allegedly made derogatory remarks about Baron's handling of the recent wave of redundancies at HQ. Word got back to Baron, who has written to every member of the RFU Council denying any wrongdoing and insisting that correct procedures were followed in the dismissal of staff. According to an insider, Cattermole believes that he should be on the management board and that his work is being overlooked.

When will it all end?

Flashback

Thanks are due to Jack Vosper, a loyal *Times* reader from Croxley Green in Hertfordshire, who offers an eyewitness account of the fastest try in Five Nations history — until John Leslie struck for Scotland at Murrayfield last weekend, that is. Vosper, now 88, was a boy of 12 watching his first live international when Leo Price, a flanker, scored for England against Wales in 1923, in ten seconds. From the kick-off, Price caught the ball and dropped for goal. The Wales forwards thought the ball would go dead but it held up in the wind and they watched helplessly as Price touched down. England won 7-4. According to the *Guinness Book of Records*, the quickest try in rugby was clocked at eight seconds. It was scored by Andrew Brown for Widden Old Boys against Old Ashtonians in 1990.

Going Dutch?

Among the 5,020 who watched London Irish at the weekend was Geoff Old, the New Zealander who is director of rugby for the Netherlands Rugby Board. Old, who is planning for his team's World Cup repechage matches later this year, was making inquiries about the availability of Jake Boer, the open-side flanker from Cape Town who has been storming around Sunbury this season. If Boer is interested, it will be for love, not money.

Under pressure

Still smarting from the national side's defeat against Scotland, Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) officials are bracing themselves this week for the arrival of the Rugby World Cup chairman, Leo Williams, who is expected in Cardiff to check that the Millennium Stadium will be ready to stage the World Cup final in November. Williams has previously expressed concern that the building might be behind schedule. Meanwhile, Glanmor Griffiths, the WRU chairman, has guaranteed that the stadium will stage Wales v South Africa on June 26 with a reduced capacity of 48,000, rising to 72,000 by the start of the World Cup on October 1. If it is not, they might struggle to get the necessary safety certificate. Griffiths said: "I had three dreams — a new stadium: to host the World Cup: and, of course, to win it." After the drubbing on Saturday, mere pipedreams.

Cup celebration

Rugby union beware: Swinton were cruising to a comfortable Challenge Cup victory at home over the amateurs of Moldgreen when, in the 63rd minute, Moldgreen scored their only points. An overjoyed Ryan Waters, the centre, ran across to the visiting supporters and ripped off his shirt to reveal a black bra, which he ceremoniously tossed into the crowd. What the rest of his team-mates were wearing under their kit, we shall never know.

☐ Congratulations to Colin Lambert, of Syston, Leicestershire, who has won a pair of tickets to the Calcutta Cup game at Twickenham on Saturday week, courtesy of The Famous Grouse. Mr Lambert's entry was the first drawn out of the postbag that correctly identified Paul Burnell as the prop who played for Scotland in the grand-slam game in 1990 and also against South Africa last autumn. Two runners-up, Paul Dijkstra, of Beckenham, and A. O'Dell, of Runcorn, will each receive a bottle of whisky.

MARK SOUSTER

CRICKET

Scotland wait on Hamilton

By Our Sports Staff

SCOTLAND'S participation in this summer's World Cup may have been known for almost two years, but the reality hit home for George Salmond, their captain, today when the squad was named.

As anticipated, one of the 15 places has been left vacant until the England selectors confirm whether Gavin Hamilton, an Anglo-Scot, is in their final plans. Craig Wright is likely to step up should Hamilton be required by England.

Jim Love and his fellow selectors have put the emphasis firmly on experience, particularly in the batting order, where Iain Philip and Bruce Patterson, boasting almost 200 caps and 75 years between them, have seen off challengers to their opening partnership.

Salmond said: "In three months we'll be on the world stage, and the prospect is a bit scary. But I'm convinced that we've picked a group of guys capable of lifting their game." Scotland will need just that — their first game in the World Cup is against Australia, the favourites, at Worcester on May 16.

SQUAD: G Salmond (Grange, captain), M Allingham (Heriot's), J Blain (Northants), J Brinkley (unattached), A Butt (Heriot's), A Davies (West Lothian), N Dyer (Chichester), B Patterson (Ayr), I Philip (Stenhousemuir), K Sheridan (Pollock), M Smith (Aberdeenshire), I Stanger (Clydesdale), P Steindl (unattached), G Williamson (Clydesdale)

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Philadelphia 90 Detroit 85; Toronto 77 Milwaukee 91; Miami 101 Boston 108; Minnesota 74 San Antonio 70; Chicago 71 Atlanta 87; Dallas 79 Utah 90; Phoenix 95 Sacramento 112; Seattle 90 Golden State 71

CRICKET

International match

New Zealand Under-19 v England Under-19

WELLINGTON (third day of four): New Zealand Under-19, with four second-innings wickets in hand, are 192 runs ahead of England Under-19

NEW ZEALAND UNDER-19: First Innings 110 (J R Tucker 5-35)

Second Innings

M Papps lbw b Bridge	127
T McIntosh lbw b Haywood	81
B Patton c Wallace b Tucker	6
*J I Englefield c Wallace b Whiley	45
J McNamee lbw b Bridge	7
J E G Franklin b Bridge	9
† P McGlashan not out	10
M Hendry not out	2
Extras (b 12, lb 8)	20
Total (6 wkts)	307

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-144, 2-172, 3-249, 4-275, 5-284, 6-303

BOWLING: Bulbeck 23-8-51-0; Whiley 27-7-55-1; Haywood 16.2-6-48-1; Tucker 14-4-45-1; Dawson 35-16-47-0; Bridge 33-14-41-3

ENGLAND UNDER-19: First Innings 225 (M A Gough 116, H Shaw 5-50)

Umpires: R Garland and D Alexander

CYCLING

TOUR OF LANGKAWI: Eighth stage (197km): 1, E Wohlberg (Can) 5hr 5min 23sec; 2, V Kravechenko (Kaz); 3, B Michael (Can) both at same time. British placing: 27, M Botfill 10min 53sec. Leading overall positions: 1, M Sonne (Den) 33 12 34; 2, P Lanfranchi (It) same time; 3, A Petacchi (It) 4. British placing: 52, J Winn 21 44 58

FOOTBALL

European Championship

Qualifying group six

CYPRUS (3) 4 SAN MARINO (0) 0
Metaxiaridis 18
Constantinou 32, 45
Christodoulou 89

Qualifying group eight

MALTA (0) 0 YUGOSLAVIA (1) 3
Nadj 22, 55
Milosevic 90

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ireland	3	2	0	1	7	1	6
Macedonia	3	2	0	1	8	4	6
Yugoslavia	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
Croatia	3	2	0	1	7	5	6
Malta	5	0	0	5	2	18	0

TENNENT'S SCOTTISH CUP: Third-round replay: Postponed: Ross County v Clydebank

INTERNATIONAL MATCHES: Albania 2 Macedonia 0 (in Tirana); Oman 1 Switzerland 2 (in Muscat); Poland 1 Finland 1 (in Valletta)

Tuesday's late results

UNDER-21 INTERNATIONAL MATCH: England 2 France 1

B INTERNATIONAL MATCH: Wales 1 Northern Ireland 0

NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE: Dover 2 Farnborough 1

TENNENT'S SCOTTISH CUP: Third-round replay: Dundee Utd 1 Queen's Pk 0

FA TROPHY: Fourth-round replay: Rushden and Diamonds 1 Woking 2

RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Bognor Regis 3 Maidenhead 1; Chertsey 0 Braintree 3; Uxbridge 0 Croydon 0. Second division: Abingdon Town 0 Hungerford 4; Barking 0 Hemel Hempstead 3; Chalfont St Peter 2 Met Police 0. Third division: Clapton 0 Corinthian Casuals 1; Egham 2 Camberley 0. Puma Cup: Second round: Dulwich Hamlet 3 Basingstoke 1. Vandanel Trophy: Third round: Bedford Town 0 Leighton 0

ENDSLEIGH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Quarter-final: Cheltenham 2 Hayes 1

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: West Ham 1 Reading 0; Queens Park Rangers 0 Peterborough 3; Brentford 1 Crystal Palace 1

COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Almondsbury 4 Harrow Hill 0

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Melksham 3 Bristol Manor Farm 1

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Eastbourne 1 Langley Sports 1; Wick 1 Broadbridge Heath 0

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Fourth round: Coventry 3 Notts County 0; Hartlepool 2 Watford 5. Fourth-round replay: Middlesbrough 2 Scunthorpe 1. Fifth round: Arsenal 0 Crystal Palace 0

REPRESENTATIVE MATCH: Ireland B 4 FAI National League 3 (in Bray)

INTERNATIONAL MATCHES: Israel 2 Belarus 1 (in Haifa); Belgium 0 Czech Republic 1 (in Brussels); Colombia 3 Germany 3 (in Miami)

FRENCH CUP: First-round replay: Thouars 1 Paris Saint-Germain 2

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): New Jersey 3 Vancouver 4; New York Islanders 1 Washington 2; Ottawa 1 Buffalo 1 (OT); Pittsburgh 3 Montreal 2 (OT); Nashville 2 Detroit 5; Colorado 1 Calgary 2; Edmonton 0 Boston 2

RUGBY UNION

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP: First division: Postponed: Newcastle v Richmond

CLUB MATCH: Oxford 0 Oxford Univ 69

SKIING

VAIL, Colorado: World championships: Men: Combined event: 1, K A Aamodt (Nor) 2min 43.09sec; 2, L Kjus (Nor) 2 43 25; 3, P Accola (Switz) 2 43 62; 4, C Mayer (Austria) 2 43 88

SNOOKER

WEMBLEY: Benson and Hedges Masters: Second round: A Hamilton (Eng) bt J Parrott (Eng) 5-4

SQUASH

SRA NATIONAL LEAGUE: Group A: Manchester Northern 4 Capital One Nottingham 1; Hallamshire 2 UNW Northumberland 3. Group B: Ashursts Loughborough 3 Bishop's Stortford 2; Uk Packaging 5 Edgbaston Priory 2. Group C: Lee-on-Solent 3 Devon and Exeter 2; UniS Guildford 3 Aspect Chichester 2. League positions: Group A: 1, Hallamshire 26pts; 2, Capital One Nottingham 23; 3, UNW Northumberland 22; 4, TSM Cuffield 21; 5, Manchester Northern 20. Group B: 1, Uk Packaging 35pts; 2, Potters Bar 24; 3, Edgbaston Priory 25; 4, Bishop's Stortford 16; 5, Ashursts Loughborough 14. Group C: 1, UniS Guildford 37pts; 2, Devon and Exeter 24; 3, Aspect Chichester 23; 4, Lee-on-Solent 19; 5, UWIC Cardiff 9

NATIONAL SUPER LEAGUE: Ellis Stockbrokers Lingfield 2 Le Sport Colwyn Bay 1 (P Nicol bt N Taylor 9-7, 9-3, 9-6; J Wellings lost to P Lord 5-9, 8-10, 7-9; J Russell bt S Pickering 9-5, 9-0, 9-2)

TENNIS

DUBAI OPEN: First round: J van Herck (Bel) bt L Paes (India) 6-4, 6-3; J Bjorkman (Swe) bt B Becker (Ger) 6-3, 6-4; J Golmard (Fr) bt F Santoro (Fr) 6-4, 6-3. Second round: F Mantilla (Sp) bt B Black 7-6, 6-3; N Kiefer (Ger) bt A Costa (Sp) 6-3, 7-6; C Moya (Sp) bt T Muster (Austria) 6-4, 6-4

SAN JOSE, California: Sybase Open: First round: P Sampras (US) bt G Blanco (Sp) 6-4, 6-4; M Philippoussis (Aus) bt S Sargsian (Arm) 6-7, 7-5, 6-3; J Gimelstob (US) bt J-M Gambill (US) 6-3, 7-6; S Koubek (Aus) bt B Karbacher (Ger) 6-3, 6-2; C Mamiit (US) bt F Carlsen (Den) 2-6, 6-3, 7-5; M Woodforde (Aus) bt S Campbell (US) 3-6, 6-3, 7-5; J van Lottum (Holl) bt J Courier (US) 6-4, 7-6

ST PETERSBURG OPEN: First round: G Raoux (Fr) bt D Vacek (Cz) 7-6, 6-4; A Clement (Fr) bt K Alami (Mor) 6-2, 6-7, 6-4; M Rosset (Switz) bt S Petrushevsky (Russ) 6-0, 6-2; J Knippschild (Ger) bt A Chesnokov (Russ) 6-1, 6-3. Second round: I Kornienko (Russ) bt M-K Goellner (Ger) 3-6, 7-6, 6-3; A Pavel (Rom) bt J Tarango (US) 5-6, 6-3, 6-2

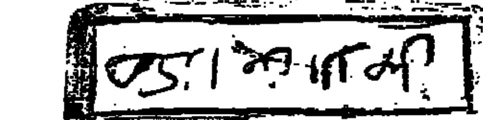
POOLS DIVIDENDS

BRITTENS: Treble chance: 23pts £279.00; 22 £4.00; 21 £0.90. Four draws: £24.50. Five aways: £7.10. Eight homes: £25.00

LITTLEWOODS: Treble chance: 24pts £225,504.40; 23 £1,257.15; 22 £63.45; 21 £17.75. Half-time results: 22pts £8,886.90. Four draws: £24.70. Nine homes: £1,381.00. Five aways: £10.15

VERNONS: Treble chance: 23pts £4,484.10; 22 £39.65; 21 £10.30

ZETTERS: Treble chance: 24pts £8,491.70; 23 £83.55; 22 £6.65; 21 £1.05. Four draws: £15.20. Eight homes: £11.00. Four aways: £1.00. Easy six: £49.40. All-draws treble chance (no 24pts winners): 23pts £6.75; 22 £0.35. Lucky numbers: 27 29 17 13 4 9





ADRIAN SHERRATT

Acclimatising: Rogers trains in North London in the clothes that he will wear in Antarctica in the first of his seven marathons on seven continents

The mother of all marathons



BRYANT'S EYE

Here's the story of one sportsman who would undoubtedly test positive for what may be the most effective performance-enhancer of all — obsession.

While the tarnished fat cats of the International Olympic Committee were wasting hours and thousands of dollars debating whether sportsmen should be tested and banned for taking everything from poison to cough mixture, they might have been better employed working out what strange substance really makes a sportsman attempt something crazy.

Obsession is what does it for most of them and they don't come more obsessive than a fit, fair-haired runner from Chester, Tim Rogers. Today finds him somewhere close to the South Pole, limbering up for a marathon. Well, seven marathons, actually, for he is setting out on the most outrageous globe-trotting adventure that he and his support team could dream up. He is, he declared, about to slog his way through seven marathons on seven continents in 77 days.

At 35 years old, and with a full-time job working for the Littlewoods catalogue company, Rogers is one of that breed of runners who cover the distance, not to run fast times and carry off prizes, but to satisfy a personal obsession with a challenge. They are a breed let loose on the streets of Britain by Chris Brasher when he dreamt up the first London Marathon at the beginning of the 1980s. In April, thousands of them will be at it again in London, raising millions for charity.

But for the true obsessive, one marathon is never enough. They fear that running 26 miles has become too routine an affair — with grannies and people with one leg doing it — so they need to seek out ever stronger doses of the impossible. Hence the ambition of Tim Rogers. He wants his own spot in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

His preparation for the Antarctica Marathon will take in a stomach-testing ocean crossing through rough seas from Tierra del Fuego past Cape Horn to the bleak, ice-hard land where the Atlantic and Pacific oceans meet. This is not pleasant running country. It is an icy desert with the risk of blinding blizzards, and fewer than 160 runners, most of them from New Zealand, South Africa and the United States, will be making the start line on King George Island. It is only the third time that this marathon has been staged and the organisers say it will be the last, so Rogers has only this one chance of fulfilling his obsessive dream.

"It will undoubtedly be the toughest marathon I will ever face," he said. "I dread the boat crossing. Apparently each time they've had this race some of the runners never get over the seasickness and can't even start it. But I've trained furiously for this and I'm determined not to collapse at the first hurdle."

After he runs in the Antarctic on Saturday, he has only a fortnight between each of his next two efforts — the Cape Town Marathon in South Africa on February 28 and the Hong Kong on March 14. Just one week later he flies to Hawaii for the Maui Marathon on March 21, then it's back to Europe for the Paris Marathon on April 4.

Less than a fortnight after that, Rogers will leave his home in Chester for Chile and the Santiago Marathon on April 18.

Then he's off to the other side of the globe for the climax of his round-the-world in 77 days adventure — a run in the Rotorua Marathon in New Zealand on May 1.

The "record" that he hopes to beat on May Day belongs to a Japanese athlete, Hajime Nish, who ran marathons on seven continents in seven months.

Of course, being a genuinely obsessive marathon runner and traveller, Rogers has not stepped on to this crazy, record-setting treadmill overnight. During the past 18 months he has already knocked off 13 marathons in places as far flung as Costa Rica, Cape Town, Copenhagen and Sydney. Every time he pulls on his racing shoes he raises thousands for charity and on his latest adventure he is coining it for Comic Relief, Weston Spirit (a charity headed by the Falkland veteran, Simon Weston), Cottage Homes and a number of local charities.

Rogers knows that by attacking so many marathons he can never go for speed. He ran his fastest for the distance (a modest 3hr 50min) in Sydney, but only then because he had to. The start of the race was delayed by an hour and a half, which left him with a problem catching his flight home.

So he ran faster than ever before, was whisked away from the finish line by a marshal's car and arrived at the airport, still in his running gear, just in time to sweat up the aircraft steps before the doors were shut.

You might think that if Rogers lurches to the finish line in New Zealand in May, with his seven marathons on seven continents behind him, he might relax with his obsession satisfied. Forget it.

"There's still the Everest Marathon and the Sahara Marathon," he said, "and on January 1, 2000, there's only one place to be — back in New Zealand running a marathon in the first part of the world to see the sun rise that day."

Marathon Millennium obsession — now that is serious.

JOHN BRYANT

DRUGS IN SPORT: SWIMMER AND SHOT PUTTER TO USE NEW EVIDENCE IN BID TO PROVE THEIR INNOCENCE

De Bruin's campaign lifted by revelation

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

EVIDENCE which came to light yesterday that the security packs used to transport urine samples for drug-testing could be opened and resealed without detection has raised Michelle de Bruin's hopes of being cleared of a doping offence and has given Paul Edwards cause for double celebration.

De Bruin, who as Michelle Smith won three Olympic swimming gold medals for Ireland in 1996, said last night that her attempt to prove her innocence had been enhanced significantly by the development. Edwards, the Great Britain international shot putter, who was banned for life but freed yesterday to compete, pending a hearing, said he would use the new evidence as part of his defence.

Edwards was suspended in 1994 for four years and later banned for life for a second offence. However, UK Athletics has deemed that Edwards's hearing under the former governing body, the British Athletic Federation, was inadequate and the 1990 Commonwealth bronze medal-winner intends to compete on Saturday in an open meeting at Crystal Palace, three days before his fortieth birthday.

Dr David Brown, a chemist, has shown how the Versapak security containers used to collect the samples from Smith and Edwards could be tampered with by placing them in boiling water, opening the lid with a kitchen knife and resealing while leaving the ring-pull unopened. The UK Sports Council (UKSC) used the Versapak equipment for three years up to May 1998, before changing supplier. De Bruin's case is due to be heard by the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne on May 3.

Peter Lennon, De Bruin's legal adviser, said that this latest development would have "a very significant effect on her case". Lennon added: "We had already raised at the doping control panel hearing the fact that we believed this was in the public domain by virtue of an Internet website. That was not accepted by the doping control panel in so far as they said it was a theoretical possibility and no more than that.

"Now that it has been proved by David Brown, it does give lack of credibility to the argument by the Fina [international governing body] doping panel that if it was not the athlete, who else could it have been? There is now a credible argument that the Versapak kit system in operation at the time was rubbish."

Speaking on RTE Irish radio last night, De Bruin said: "This is only one string in our bow in terms of the evidence Peter will be bringing to Lausanne, but it certainly gives a lot of credence to what we knew all along, that this type of Versapak can be tampered with. It can be done in three minutes and it is impossible to detect the canister has been tampered with."

The UKSC attempted in a statement "to quash suggestions that the sample collection equipment used in recent years under its procedures could be manipulated easily". However, it stopped short of shooting down Dr Brown's evidence and declined to when questioned.

A spokesman for Versapak admitted that one of its products used until May last year could be tampered with. "We have not changed the material," the spokesman said. "What we did last year was to modify the design so that it is impossible to gain access to the container by this method. Opening the container when it was in common use in the past was a matter of opportunity, time, tools and motivation."

In explaining why Edwards had been allowed to return, Jayne Pearce, speaking for UK Athletics, said: "We have been advised that there were inconsistencies with regard to the hearing." Edwards said: "I have maintained from the beginning that the samples tested were either not mine or have been interfered with."

Edwards: banned for life

De Bruin: arbitration

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 43

BULLI

(c) An eponym of Bulli, a town south of Sydney, New South Wales, used (chiefly attributively) to designate a type of soil used especially for cricket pitches.

DVORNIK

(c) A house-porter. The Russian dvor means a door. "I said goodnight to every one. I could hear the laughter as I waited at the bottom of the stairs for the dvornik to let me out."

GILLION

(a) A name sometimes used for 1,000 million by writers wishing to avoid the ambiguity between American and British uses of billion.

ANGAREB

(c) A stretcher or light bedstead used by the Arabs, and in Egypt and the Sudan. The native name.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1 Ne6! fxe6 ... 2 Rh8+Kg7 (2 Kxh8 3 Qxf7 threatening Rh1) ... 3 Rh7+Kxh7 ... 4 Qf7+Kh6 ... 5 Rh1 checkmate

☐ Monday's solution should have been: 1 Qxe8+! Qxe8; 2 d7 Qd8; 3 Bg5 and wins



TELEVISION CHOICE

Tonight is crime night

The Bill
ITV, 8.00pm

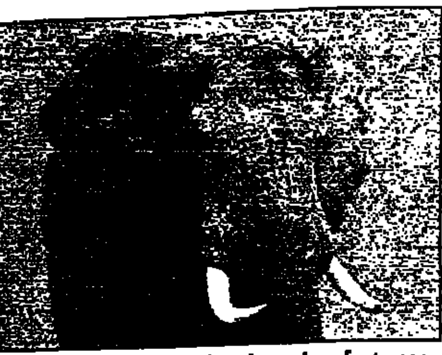
Thursday night is obviously crime night on ITV but both this one and the *The Knock* are worth singling out. In *The Age of Chivalry* an hysterical young woman is picked up by a patrol car as she staggers, muddied and bloodied, out of dark woodland. She is articulate (just) in her description of the two men who held her down and raped her and they are eventually traced to a local wine bar where one works as a waiter. He turns out to be the son of a strait-laced father and a long-suffering mother — and he hates women. Surprisingly, it is DCI Burnside (Christopher Ellison) who comes across as gentle and understanding — especially compared with his acid-tongued colleague Liz (Libby Davison) when they cross-examine the pair. Burnside puts rape almost on a par with murder so why then does he allow both men to go free?

The Knock
ITV, 9.00pm

Cherie Lunghi continues to play the *femme fatale* of the "business world" (drug running to you and me) and it's worth watching this last of an often thrilling, certainly expensive (no faking the foreign locations here) series just to catch her face move in five different directions at once as she pursues ladies (apparently), drug barons (less apparently) and big money. Tonight's plot ties up — more or less — the three-part story involving heroin traffic from Bangkok, through Delhi to Amsterdam and London. If the dialogue — "in my office — now!", "you — a word!" — leaves something to be desired the pace is so frenetic that blink and you could miss a clue. I'm still trying to work out how a certain Mr Smoothie manages to smuggle in Mercedes cars by carting around wheelbarrows full of dirt. What have I missed here?

Meet the Ancestors
BBC2, 9.00pm

The Black Hand — a symbol of just that — runs through this archaeological mystery to make it one of the most fascinating programmes in the series. When a farmer near Chester investigates a strange mound on his land he begins an excavation of the remains of Poulton Chapel, built by Cistercian monks in the 12th century. Archaeologists working with artists, genealogists and carbon dating equipment reconstruct this charming little abbey — but there's more. Among the people buried there it would seem that pride of place has gone to one Sir Nicholas Manley, a wealthy Anglo-Frenchman whose family used the chapel in the 16th century. Manley? Main is French for hand and his were apparently spectacular. His coat of arms was a black hand ... could there be any living Manleys who might boast such an insignia? As the presenter Julian Richards reveals — there are, and they do. It is an extraordinary story.



Horizon examines the changing fortunes of the African elephant (BBC2, 9.30pm)

Horizon: Elephants or Ivory
BBC2, 9.30pm

A documentary which in some ways covers old arguments but which will make you think afresh about the future of the African elephant. Adrian Pennick's disturbing film travels to the great elephant reserves of Kenya and the communal lands of Zimbabwe and the Kruger National Park in South Africa. Viewers can hear for themselves the arguments of local zoologists and ecologists — and many of them feel that a sensible culling of the great creatures is not only to their advantage — there are now too many elephants to survive in their natural habitats — but that the desperately poor people of Zimbabwe need the profits that ivory would bring. **Elizabeth Cowley**

RADIO CHOICE

Ruskin at 100
Radio 4, 8.00pm

The great colleges of our great universities have such familiar names that most of us never stop to wonder about their history, which is not the least of the reasons to welcome this fascinating half-hour about Ruskin College, Oxford, which held its founding meeting in Oxford Town Hall on February 22, 1899. As Steve Richards shows here, this meeting was truly radical. It was to establish the first major college dedicated to the further education of the working man, and within a few years it would become the educational wing of the labour movement. John Prescott and Roy Jenkins are among those taking part tonight but the programme is more than a history; it also asks whether in the age of new Labour, Ruskin has a role.

Performance on 3: London Mozart Players
Radio 3, 7.00pm

This is one of those occasions that demonstrates what Radio 3 should be all about and why it is crucially different from Classic FM. *Performance on 3* is at the heart of the live music policy at the network and tonight's gala concert from the Festival Hall, marking 50 years of the London Mozart Players, promises to be an extra-special occasion. The Players were formed by Harry Blech as a semi-professional group and few of the people involved in the early days could have dreamt that the orchestra's popularity and status would one day fill halls around the world. Tonight's concert includes the 28th and 29th Symphonies and the Concerto in C for Flute and Harp, featuring James Galway and Marisa Robles. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00pm** Kevin Greening **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Steve Lamacq: The Evening Session **10.00** Trade Update **10.10** John Peel. Session tracks from Comatose **12.00am** Andy Kershaw **2.00** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Alex Lester **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Richard Allinson **12.00pm** Jimmy Young **2.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** David Allan **8.00** Paul Jones **9.00** Punt and Dennis: It's Been a Bad Week. New series. A light-hearted look back at the week's news stories (1/6) **9.30** Comedy Showcase: Canned Heat. Malik's mini-mart becomes a sex-free zone (4/7) **10.00** Melly Talks Jazz **10.30** Nicky Horne **12.00am** Katrina Leskanich **3.00** Mo Dutta

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00pm** The Midday News **1.00** Ruscoe and *Co* **4.00** Drive **7.00** News Extra! **7.30** Hardest Game **8.00** Inside Edge **9.00** Hoops **9.30** Sportshop **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00pm** My Favourite Year **1.00** Anna Raeburn **3.00** Peter Deeley **5.00** The SportZone **7.00** One to One with Andy Gray **8.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins and the Creatures of the Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Mark Forrest **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Peter and Geoff **10.00** James Merritt **1.00am** Steve Power **4.30** Richard Allen

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** From Our Own Correspondent **8.20** Off the Shelf: Boyhood **8.35** The Works **9.00** World News **9.05** Network **9.20** Andy Kershaw's World of Music **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** Performance **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Assignment **12.00pm** World News **12.05** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** The Works **2.30** Meridian Books **3.00** World News **3.05** Sports Round-Up **3.15** Westway **3.30** The Greenfield Collection **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** The Good Relationship Guide **4.45** The Lab **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** Assignment **7.00** World News **7.05** The Works **7.30** From Our Own Correspondent **7.45** Off the Shelf: Boyhood **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian Books **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-Up **10.30** The Good Relationship Guide **10.45** The Lab **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00am** The World Today **12.30** The Works **12.56** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Westway **1.45** Performance **2.00** The World Today **2.30** Focus on Faith **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour. Plus, favourite pieces voted for in the Classic FM Top 300 **12.00pm** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents favourite music **2.00** Concerto. Saint-Saens (Piano Concerto No 3 in E flat major) **3.00** Jane Markham. Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. The latest headlines and sport updates **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Schumann (Andante and Variations in B flat); Beethoven (33 Variations in C major); Grieg (Old Norwegian Romance with Variations). Jenkins (Adiemus Variations) **11.00** Mappin at Night **2.00am** Concerto. Saint-Saens (Piano Concerto No 3 in E flat major) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Petroc Trelawny
9.00 Masterworks with Penny Gore
10.30 Artist of the Week: Leonard Slatkin
11.00 Sound Stories: Five Femmes Fatales (4/5)
12.00pm Composer of the Week: Telemann
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Lwei Qin, cello, Gretel Dowdeswell, piano
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Philharmonic
4.00 Ensemble (r)
4.45 Music Machine with Verity Sharp
5.00 In Tune with Sean Rafferty
7.00 Performance on 3 Live from the Festival Hall See Choice **8.10** London Mozart Players at 50 **8.30** Concert part two
9.45 Postscript: Magnum at the Millennium The shaping events and movements of the postwar era (4/5) (r)
10.10 Music Restored Lucie Skeaping introduces a selection of music in praise of the Virgin
10.45 Night Waves Paul Allen talks to Thomas L. Thompson, about his new book
11.30 Jazz Notes with Alyn Shipton
12.00am Composer of the Week: Liszt (r)
1.00 Through the Night 1.00 Concerto Koln. Salieri (Piano Concerto in C). Mozart (Piano Concerto No 19 in F, K459; Symphony No 40 in G minor, K550) **2.25** Spohr (Notturno in C, Op 34) **3.00** Schools **5.00** Rach- maninov, arr Cailliet (Prelude in C sharp minor, Op 3 No 2) **5.35** Mozart (Flute Concerto No 2 in D, K314)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today 6.00 Today
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament
9.00 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time
9.30 Matchmakers with Jo Morris (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: Tulip with Anna
9.45 (LW) Daily Service Director of music Alan Wilson
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray
11.00 From Our Own Correspondent
11.30 Fat Chance New series (1/5)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00pm (FM) News 12.04 You and Yours
1.00 The World at One 1.30 Open Country
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Cuban Solo by David Pownall
3.00 Call You and Yours 0870 010 0444
3.30 Going, Going, Gone (4/5) (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle 4.00 Law in Action
4.30 The Material World with Trevor Phillips
5.00 PM 6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Yes, Minister (r) **7.00 The Archers**
7.15 Front Row 7.45 Speaking for Themselves (r)
8.00 Ruskin at 100 See Choice
8.30 The Week in Westminster
9.00 Testbeds with Vanessa Collingridge
9.30 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time (r)
10.00 The World Tonight with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Mark Twain Stories (r)
11.00 Late Night on 4: The Way It Is Satire
11.30 (FM) A Good Read (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
12.00am News 12.30 The Late Book: Lamona's Tale
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

Warning. Your love can turn sour, too

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

Was James Kent's **Inside Story: Heartbreak** (BBC1) supposed to make us feel better about the arrival of St Valentine's Day and the promise of new love? Or was it just warning us that however great the rollercoaster of love might feel on the way up, it feels so bad on the way down that even being allowed to slap Linda Tripp repeatedly with wet fish (plaice is good) wouldn't make you feel any better.

Here were men and women who'd had their hearts broken into so many pieces that, like a smashed glass, they were impossible to put back together again. At times, just listening to their stories made you feel like an intruder. Here was a woman who had re-told the tale of her husband's deceit so many times that she'd run out of friends, run out of therapists, run out of agony aunts, run out of radio phone-ins to tell it to: there was only the TV camera, and us, left. She looked like any other middle-aged woman who still cared enough to dress well, dab on make-up, fix her hair. Only she wept, unable to stop herself; and if you were to cut through her she'd be like a human stick of rock, only with the name "Richard" running through her instead of "Blackpool" or "Skegness".

"I don't know what made me stop by the room where the phone was, but I did. I don't know why," she recalled. "And all I heard was his voice saying, 'Hello, how are you ... You're all right ... I'm sorry, I'm still at a meeting ... But you're all right. I'll ring you tomorrow. Bye'. I went into the sitting room and just stood there and he came in and took one look at me and said, 'What's the matter with you?'. I said, 'Richard, you've just rung another woman', and he just flew into the most fantastic rage and he stormed out."

This happened 25 years ago, and still she can replay the scene as vividly as a video in her mind's eye. She knows the script as fluently as an actress locked into a long run at a theatre. "I exist until I die," was the rosiest gloss she was willing to put on her future.

James Kent, treading as warily as a cat burglar through all this bitterness and heartache, nevertheless left no stone unturned in his determination to show us that *any* love can turn sour. A man in Telford had left his partner heartbroken after deciding to share his life with a woman in Massachusetts whom he had just met in an Internet chat room. Angela's husband ran off with the babysitter. Neil abandoned Dawn and their children to move in with another man. A daughter had set up home with her sister's husband. "It's like a death," sobbed the mother of the two women, "only she's only up the road."

Heartbreak hit these people like an oncoming truck. Some survived the crash, others are crippled for life. This painful, moving film is what *The Jerry Springer Show* might be like if the participants weren't behaving with that demented exaggeration that has become the template for Confessional TV.

But it's not always a woman who break a man's heart. The final, taut episode of Jenny Crowther's **Mersey Blues** (BBC2) left you wondering if Elmore Davies — the disgraced Detective Chief Inspector who fell into Crowther's net while she was making her fly-on-the-wall series about Merseyside cops — wasn't another story about a man spurned by the only thing he had ever truly loved: the police force.

Davies, who was arrested for corruption in March 1997, is behind bars. But Crowther's homing instinct for tension left you guessing almost until the last about Davies's guilt. We heard that months of round-the-clock surveillance had unearthed nothing. Everything in his career pointed to a man who had never been bought by the mob. Crowther teased us into speculating whether it was possible that Davies had been wrongly accused, maybe even fitted up by enemies within the force who bridled at his manner.

But then Davies — a burly Michelin of a man — slowly deflated on hearing that he hadn't got the career promotion he pined for. You could actually see the life quietly hissing out of him. Was it coincidence, careful editing, or cause-and-effect that, shortly after this snub, a man who in 32 years on the force had no record of corruption, reacted as furiously as a woman scorned by suddenly selling himself to the other side?

If heartbreak is so painful, then it seemed perfectly sensible for Samuel West, the narrator of **Battle of the Sexes** (BBC2), to ask the key question of the evening: "Why bother with sex at all?"

Some animals avoid the risk of heartbreak by doing away with males altogether. These females just clone their babies. Sam insisted that "in a perfect and stable world it's likely that all females of all species would prefer to clone". Males are useful only because they help to introduce some genetic variability. Well phooey to genetic variability, said the whip-tailed lizards of Arizona and New Mexico, and did away with men long ago. Now they are perfectly suited to desert life and don't want male genes messing this up.

Female whip-tailed lizards still have to *pretend* to copulate, because the motions of sex stimulate their ovaries. But once they dismount I'll bet they giggle all night about how clumsy males are, while chain-smoking Sobranies and singing Marlene Dietrich songs.

Well, just wait till their daughters log into an Internet lizard chat room, glimpse the lizard equivalent of Brad Pitt e-mailing them from Brazil, and start nagging their mums to let them stay out late to experience some genetic variability: then those smug whip-tailed females will get to see what heartbreak's all about!

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (42985)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (97362)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (8081817)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (4480492)
10.55 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (6552256)
11.00 Real Rooms (6562633)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (6532492)
11.55 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (1722879)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (59053)
12.30 Wipeout (1130351)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (48288343)
1.00 One O'Clock News; Weather (T) (67121)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (47900411)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (25896966)
2.05 Live Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters Dougie Donnelly introduces early quarter-final action from Wembley Conference Centre (3943527)
2.55 Body Spies A couple of celebrity lookalikes go on a diet (5297817)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6110546) **3.45** The All New Popeye Show (2097430) **3.55** Pocket Dragon Adventures (2093614) **4.05** Anthony Ant (6650256) **4.20** Home Farm Twins (6631121) **4.35** Short Change (5975411) **5.00** Newsround (2422879) **5.10** Grange Hill (6067121)
5.33 Rewind (T) (181343)
5.35 Neighbours Paul and Hannah's relationship reaches crisis point (r) (T) (500188)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (140)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (492)
7.00 Watchdog with Anne Robinson Consumer investigation show (T) (7817)
7.30 EastEnders Ruth makes a momentous decision (T) (904)
8.00 Barking Mad Vets and animal behaviour experts offer advice to people with problem pets, helping the frustrated owners of a collie which has taken over the family home (T) (3237)
8.30 Fat Free Tracey puts her new cooking skills to the test by preparing Christmas lunch for 14 people (6/6) (T) (5072)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (7898)



Amanda Burton stars as the pathologist Dr Sam Ryan (9.30pm)

9.30 Silent Witness Sam investigates the murder of a glamorous estate agent whose body was discovered in an empty house. Amanda Burton stars as the sceptical forensic expert (r) (T) (10527)
11.00 Question Time Topical debate from Southampton (T) (645140)
12.05am Welcome to Blood City (1977) Four amnesiacs find themselves in a surreal Wild West town. Sci-fi adventure, starring Jack Palance, Samantha Eggar, Keir Dullea and Barry Morse. Directed by Peter Sasdy (T) (3376638)
1.35 Weather (8619386)
1.40 BBC News 24 (33313524)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Open a Door (3248966) **7.05** Teletubbies (6166508) **7.30** Snorks (6945275) **7.55** Blue Peter (4025558) **8.20** Taz-Mania (7037256) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (3016904) **8.50** Fiddley Foodle Bird (3012188) **9.00** Job Bank (4780891) **9.10** Belief File (4836701) **9.30** Watch (1928546) **9.45** Come Outside (1916701) **10.00** Teletubbies (51072) **10.30** Storytime (2913695) **10.45** Teaching Today (609527) **11.15** Zig Zag (8911166) **11.35** Pathways of Belief (8622546) **11.50** Job Bank (4450661) **12.00pm** Job Bank (7141546) **12.10** English File (9679324) **12.30** Working Lunch (82879) **1.00** Fiddley Foodle Bird (94261633)
1.10 The Travel Hour France's Dordogne and Perigord regions (r) (9925695)
2.10 Wildlife on Two The ground hornbill of the African savannah (r) (T) (61071904)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (3333782)
2.45 Westminster (T) (2880324)
3.25 News; Weather (T) (2959102)
3.30 Live Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters The conclusion of the first best-of-11-frames quarter-final (501879)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Kira is forced to make a choice (r) (T) (289091)
6.45 Live Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters (464184)
7.30 Regional programme (T) (546)
8.00 The Travel Show Ideas on millennium destinations (T) (1879)
8.30 Jeremy Clarkson's Extreme Machines Sweden's stealth warship, V8-powered swamp-buggies in Florida and a mechanical elephant (r) (T) (3614)



The reconstructed head of a medieval landowner (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **Meet the Ancestors** The discovery of a human jawbone in a Chester field, which led to the unearthing of a 12th-century chapel and the medieval remains (T) (8140)
9.30 CHOICE **Horizon** A journey from the elephant reserves of Kenya, through Zimbabwe to the Kruger National Park to investigate the potential consequences of lifting the ban on ivory trading in Africa (T) (277508)
10.20 Meetings with Remarkable Trees An ancient sweet chestnut (r) (T) (359343)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (202614)
11.15 Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters Highlights of day five (353072)
11.55 Skiing Forecast (519966)
12.00am Despatch Box Political news (35763)
12.30 BBC Learning Zone: *Open University:* Athens — Democracy for the Few **1.00** Cultures of the Walkman **1.30** They Did it Their Way **2.00** Further Education: Customer Care **4.00** Languages: The French Experience 17-20 **5.00** Teacher Training: Central Bureau **5.30** The Bridge: Starting Secondary School **5.45** Open University: Bajourou — Music of Mali **6.10** Global Media

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (88275)
6.00 GMTV (3969558)
9.25 Trisha (T) (5441343)
10.30 This Morning (T) (11548850)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (7124879)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (T) (90643)
1.00 Shortland Street Lionel's in the doldrums (92817)
1.30 Home and Away (T) (40184)
2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (5869782)
2.45 Dale's Supermarket Sweep The shopping quiz (T) (979898)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (4759184)
3.20 HTV News (T) (7909607)
3.25 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (8159940) **3.35** The Adventures of Dawdle (3151701) **3.45** The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries (3148237) **4.00** Lavender Castle (6646053) **4.15** Hey Arnold! (3316695) **4.40** Children's Ward (2206614)
5.10 A Country Practice (9207411)
5.36 HTV Crimestoppers (175782)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (T) (115169)
6.00 Home and Away Ailsa has an unpleasant experience (r) (T) (440508)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight (T) (975411)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (712362)
6.30 WEST: The West Tonight (T) (188)
7.00 Emmerdale (T) (2985)
7.30 WEST: We Can Work It Out With reports on the problem of new cars which spring leaks (512)
7.30 WALES: Forgotten Treasures Wales's very own Flipper (T) (512)
8.00 CHOICE **The Bill** Burnside and Rawton arrest a waiter on suspicion of raping a woman outside a Tube station — but it transpires he is being helped by an accomplice and has an alibi (T) (1594)



Cherie Lunghi as Toni and Caroline Lee Johnson as Diane (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **The Knock** Final episode of the customs drama, with Caroline Lee Johnson, Steve Toussaint and Cherie Lunghi (6/6) (T) (1350)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (45850)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (T) (592879)
10.40 Thursday Night Live Hard-hitting debates (4827508)
12.10am WEST: Tales from the Darkside A dying teenage hacker gives his sister instructions she believes will enable his computer to resurrect him (r) (6072980)
12.10 WALES: We Can Work It Out New cars which spring leaks (6072980)
12.40 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (3880560)
1.25 T in the Park Highlights of the Scottish music festival (8427386)
2.25 Box Office America (7896831)
2.55 Cybernet Computer news (1429183)
3.20 Murder, She Wrote While in Australia, Jessica sparks a clash between sheep farmers and miners (3152638)
4.10 Potty About Pets (47061831)
4.40 Coach Luther's dog dies (83783812)
5.00 ITV Nightscreen (97164)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except: **12.20pm-12.30 Central News;** Weather (T) (8516411) **1.00 Echo Point** (92817) **1.30 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (1610072) **2.15-2.45 Home and Away** (T) (970527) **3.20-3.25 Central News** (T) (7909607) **5.10-5.40 Shortland Street** (9207411) **6.25-6.55 Central News;** Weather (T) (458527) **6.55-7.00 Lifeline** (T) (581614) **10.30-10.40 Central News;** Weather (T) (592879) **1.30am Pirate TV** (2941305) **1.55 Highlander** (r) (6808218) **2.45 Pop Down the Pub** (r) (95763) **3.15 Cybernet** (80304367) **3.40 Potty About Pets** (40224270) **4.10 Central Jobfinder '99** (T) (6008137) **5.20-5.30 Asian Eye** (7425812)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except. **12.15pm-12.27 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (7124879) **12.27-12.30 Illuminations** (8524430) **1.00 Emmerdale** (r) (T) (92817) **1.30 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (1610072) **2.15-2.45 Home and Away** (T) (970527) **3.20-3.25 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (7909607) **5.08 Birthday People** (5309237) **5.10-5.40 Home and Away** (T) (9207411) **6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live** (T) (87324) **10.30-10.40 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (592879) **12.10am-12.40 Short Story Cinema** (6072980)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (7124879) **5.10-5.40 Home and Away** (T) (9207411) **6.00 Meridian Tonight** (T) (508) **6.30-7.00 Getaways** (6/10) (188) **10.30-10.40 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (592879) **12.10am-12.40 Jenny** (6072980) **5.00-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (97164)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (8535546) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (8516411) **5.10-5.40 Home and Away** (T) (9207411) **5.59 Anglia Weather** (T) (195546) **6.00 Anglia News** (T) (508) **6.30-7.00 About Anglia** (188) **10.29 Anglia Air Watch** (622701) **10.30-10.40 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (592879) **12.10am-12.40 Videotech** (6072980)

S4C

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (72345689) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (34115904) **9.00 Ysgolion:** History Action (T) (93272169) **9.20 Geographical Eye** (93285633) **9.40 English Programme** (63982508) **10.00 Middle English** (57217091) **10.20 Fourways Farm** (65738633) **10.30 Scientific Eye** (69929527) **10.50 What the Papers Said** (21923898) **11.00 The Number Crew** (29204817) **11.10 Channel Hopping — Auf Deutsch** (53293508) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (40697985) **12.00pm Bewitched** (T) (29514898) **12.30 Sesame Street** (T) (38152985) **1.00 Planed Plant** (T) (34118091) **1.30 Travelog Treks** (T) (34234256) **1.45 FILM: On the Fiddle** (T) (37755985) **3.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (81057169) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (81069904) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (81065188) **5.00 Planed Plant** (64546879) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (81049140) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (54351362) **6.10 Heno** (T) (16234169) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (64559343) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (81066817) **8.00 Slaymaker** (T) (64568091) **8.30 Pam Fi Duw?** (T) (64554898) **9.00 I dot** (44018481) **10.00 Dispatches** (T) (29515527) **10.30 Father Ted** (r) (T) (17395275) **11.05 Friends** (r) (T) (67497430) **11.35 King of the Hill** (T) (63509701) **12.05am Rising Damp** (T) (19647299) **12.35 4 Later;** Prey (55124893) **1.30 Short Stories** (T) (58277980) **2.05 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (3622343)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (80072)
9.00 Schools: History in Action (4832985) **9.20** Geographical Eye Over Asia (4812121) **9.40** The English Programme (9212898) **10.00** Middle English (1294256) **10.20** Fourways Farm (6467343) **10.30** Scientific Eye (7960430) **10.50** What the Papers Said (3600898) **11.00** Number Crew (8441527) **11.10** Channel Hopping (9266053)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (4701)
12.00pm Sesame Street (T) (75091)
12.30 Bewitched (r) (T) (90625)
1.00 Pet Rescue (T) (90459)
1.30 The Three Stooges The terrible trio are conscripted (r) (13642169)
1.50 The Long Memory (1952) A man is released from prison and immediately sets about tracking down the group who framed him for murder. Drama, starring John Mills and Elizabeth Sellars. Directed by Robert Hamer (T) (46584140)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (966)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (701)
4.30 Countdown (T) (5969850)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (3523053)
5.30 Pet Rescue A stray dog is rushed in for treatment (T) (237)
6.00 Dishes Dating show (T) (850)
6.30 Hollyoaks Sol's job prospects improve (T) (430)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (565607)
7.50 The Millennial Miniatures (T) (617898)
8.00 Norland Nannies The girls mind the children of the rich and famous attending the Queen's Cup polo match at Windsor (5/6) (T) (9275)



Profile of one of the most successful British jockeys of all time (8.30pm)

8.30 Lester Piggott Profile of the champion jockey whose image was tarnished by a shocking disciplinary record and his conviction as a tax cheat (57362)
9.30 Dispatches A film going behind the scenes of the contest for the Labour leadership in Wales (T) (80411)
10.00 Rising Damp A smooth-talking tenant cons Rigsby (r) (T) (796343)
10.35 Whose Line Is It Anyway Hosted by Clive Anderson (r) (546459)
11.05 Ally McBeal Ally saves a man's life, and promptly becomes the object of his affection (r) (T) (195985)
12.05am 4 Later Introduction; Prey (5453706)
1.00 Vids Offbeat video review (29251)
1.30 Late Toon: Digitaline (8603725)
1.35 The Rake's Progress (1945) Rex Harrison stars as a philandering playboy who redeems himself during the Second World War, with Lili Palmer. Directed by Sidney Gilliat (54672763)
3.45 Esther Waters (1947) Costume drama about a kitchen maid who is seduced by a caddish stable lad and gets pregnant. Dirk Bogarde, Kathleen Ryan and Cyril Cusack star. Directed by Ian Dalrymple, Peter Proud (564096)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport Headline round-up (6565850)
7.00 WideWorld Part 10 Profiles of Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath and Alice Walker (r) (T) (6930091)
7.30 Milkshake! (2446625)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r); 5 News Update (3192817)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (4968091)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r), 5 News Update (4967362)
9.00 Animal House (r) (T) (1667898)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (7376121)
9.35 The Oprah Winfrey Show (6037324)
10.25 Sunset Beach Gabi and Ricardo talk frankly (T) (1044817)
11.15 Leeza (4462188)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (4938850)
12.30 Family Affairs Josh stands up for his rights (r) (T); 5 News Update (9980324)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Stephanie confronts James (T) (6939362)
1.30 The Roseanne Show The outrageous basketball star Dennis Rodman is today's guest; 5 News Update (9989695)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (5135324)
2.30 Good Afternoon An hour of leisure, lifestyle and documentary (1788904)
3.30 Charro! (1969) Elvis Presley stars in his only non-singing role, as a reformed gunslinger framed for the theft of a cannon. Western, with Ina Balin and Victor French. Directed by Charles Marquis Warren; 5 News Update (9772966)
5.20 Sunset Beach Shown earlier (r) (T); 5 News Update (7190607)
6.00 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (6392169)
6.30 Family Affairs Claire gets a shock (T) (6376121)
7.00 5 News; Weather (T) (5139140)
7.30 Malaysian Jungle Wildlife which feasts on the fruits of the giant strangler fig tree (T); 5 News Update (6305633)
8.00 The Pepsi Chart Meat Loaf joins Dr Fox to present a half-hour of live acts from London's Sound Republic (5155188)
8.30 Family Confidential Profile of a couple whose relationship proves once and for all that love knows no barriers — 84-year-old Amy and her 37-year-old husband Dave, who's so devoted he washes her hair, scrubs her back, makes love to her twice a day and even cuts her toenails (5/6); 5 News Update (5134695)
9.00 Everybody's Baby: The Rescue of Jessica McClure (TVM 1989) Dramatic reconstruction of the race against time to save the life of an 18-month-old girl who fell down a well in Texas in 1987. Starring Beau Bridges, Roxana Zal and Pat Hingle. Directed by Mel Damski (T); 5 News Update (99609459)
10.50 Bring Me the Head of Light Entertainment Improvised comedy quiz (6139091)
11.20 The Jack Docherty Show (7918492)
12.00am Live and Dangerous With Mark Webster (50177657)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H The officers are drugged and a riot breaks out (3221454)
5.20 Russell Grant's Postcards A trip to Longleat, Wiltshire (r) (39897928)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (9920980)

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● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (17140) 7.30 Chris Evans (34459) 8.30 Hollywood Squares (97237) 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (14614) 10.00 Oprah Winfrey (32459) 11.00 Guilty! (12695) 12.00pm Jenny Jones (38072) 1.00 Mad About You (16411) 1.30 Jeopardy (25508) 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (70121) 3.00 Jenny Jones (36140) 4.00 Guilty! (55275) 5.00 Star Trek: Voyager (1898) 6.00 Guilty! (2492) 6.30 Dream Team (6073) 7.00 Simpsons (2527) 7.30 Simpsons (2256) 8.00 America's Dumbest Criminals (1275) 8.30 World's Weirdest TV (1922) 9.00 Friends (51459) 9.30 ER (12188) 10.30 Veronica's Closet (68530) 11.00 Dream Team (56904) 11.30 Star Trek: Voyager (95701) 12.30am Commish (70560) 1.30 Long Play (7682522)

SKY BOX OFFICE

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SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 28)
Double Team (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
Fools Rush In (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
Paws (1998)
Boogie Nights (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)
In and Out (1997)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Widows' Peak (1994) (98085188) 7.40 Sunny Spells (1929966) 8.00 Raining Stones (1993) (6489695) 10.00 Black Rainbow (1991) (6777633) 11.45 The Innocents (1961) (2720362) 1.25am Nothing Personal (1995) (7533251) 2.50 Arizona Dream (1993) (75754015)

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Redwood Curtain (1995) (49508) 8.00 Amy (1981) (92343) 10.00 Carpool (1996) (28695) 12.00pm The Directors: Norman Jewison (21782) 1.00 Femmes Fatales (30430) 2.00 Redwood Curtain (1995) (85904) 4.00 Amy (1981) (7072) 6.00 Carpool (1996) (22633) 7.30 Tracey Takes On — Agents (5966) 8.00 Hollywood Buzz (4985) 8.30 Intimate Relations (1995) (73803695) 10.15 Courage Under Fire (1996) (387140) 12.10am How to Make an American Quilt (1995) (136589)

2.05 The Portrait of a Lady (1996) (93128473) 4.30 The Directors (25541)

SKY MOVIEMAX

5.20am Norwood (1970) (39465237) 7.00 Angus (1995) (91332) 9.00 And Baby Makes Six (1979) (81237) 11.00 Forgotten City of Planet of the Apes (TVM 1974) (49053) 1.00pm Desperate (1947) (85053) 3.00 And Baby Makes Six (1979) (58607) 5.00 Forgotten City of Planet of the Apes (TVM 1974) (68594) 7.00 Angus (1995) (22072) 9.00 Voyage of Terror (1998) (78614) 11.00 Nemesis (1992) (801430) 12.35am Jailbreak (1997) (961522) 2.10 The Ticket (1997) (9056183) 3.40 I, the Jury (1982) (486744)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror (1942) (4360324) 5.30 Hollywood Hall of Fame: Frank Sinatra (3327459) 8.00 Son of Paleface (1952) (1084053) 8.00 The Racket (1951) (1096898) 10.00 From Noon Till Three (1976) (7949430) 11.40 The Perils of Pauline (1967) (7265850) 1.25am I Walk the Line (1970) (8262909) 3.05 The Legend of Hell House (1973) (2053454) 4.40 Private Hell 36 (1954) (18664218)

TNT

9.00pm Father of the Bride (1950) (92128527) 11.00 Boys Night Out (1962) (34997891) 1.15am The Angry Hills (1959) (89565270) 3.15 Father of the Bride (1950) (42873744) 5.00 Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre 7.15 Wrestling 8.15 You're On Sky Sports! 9.00 Racing News 9.30 Aerobics 10.00 Live Golf - Dubai Desert Classic 1.00pm Golf: Australian Masters 4.00 Big Fight Countdown 4.30 Futbol Mundial 5.00 Wrestling 6.00 Sports Centre 6.30 Big Fight Countdown 7.00 League Review 7.30 Golf: Dubai Desert Classic 10.00 Sports Centre 10.15 You're On Sky Sports! 11.00 Boxing: Big Fight Countdown 11.30 Futbol Mundial 12.00am Sports Centre 12.15 You're On Sky Sports! 1.00 Live Golf: Australian Masters

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics 7.30 Sports Centre 7.45 Racing News 8.15 Unbelievable Sports 8.45 Sports Centre 9.00 Big Fight Countdown 9.30 Football 11.00 World Pool League 12.00pm Unbelievable Sports 12.30 Football 2.00 Watersports World 3.00 V-Max 3.30 Unbelievable Sports 4.00 World Pool League 5.00 Football League Review 5.30 What A Weekend 6.00 Inside the PGA Tour 6.30 The Rugby Club 7.30 Live Ice Hockey 10.00 US Golf: Buick Invitational 12.00am The Rugby Club 1.00 Ice Hockey 3.30 Live International Cricket

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm World Wrestling Federation: Superstars 1.00 Fish TV 2.00 FA Cup Final Classics 3.30 Badminton 6.30 Survival of the Fittest 7.00 Fishing: Tight Lines 8.00 Spanish Football 10.00 Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook 11.30 Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Luge 8.00 Ski-Jumping 9.00 Alpine Skiing 10.00 Live Women's Biathlon 11.00 Biathlon 12.30pm Start Your Engines 1.30 Snowboarding 2.00 Biathlon 3.00 Tennis 3.30 Live Tennis 5.30 Live Women's Alpine Skiing 6.30 Tennis 8.00 Alpine Skiing 8.30 Live Women's Alpine Skiing 9.30 Racing Line 10.00 Football 11.00 Trial 12.00am Racing Line 12.30 Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads 7.30 Neighbours 7.55 EastEnders 8.30 The Bill 9.30 When the Boat Comes In 10.30 Rhoda 11.00 Dallas 11.55 Neighbours 12.25pm EastEnders 1.00 Juliet Bravo 2.00 Dallas 2.55 The Bill 3.55 EastEnders 4.30 Rhoda 5.00 All Creatures Great and Small 6.00 Dynasty 7.00 2point4 Children 7.40 Dad's Army 8.20 The Detectives 9.00 The Young Ones 9.45 Bottom 10.25 Ivanhoe 11.30 The Bill 12.30 The Black Adder 1.10 Spender 2.05 Colin's Sandwich 3.00 Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls 7.00 On the Buses 7.30 Doctor in the House 8.00 Beadle's About 8.30 The Fosters 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 Emmerdale Farm 10.00 thirtysomething 11.00 Hawaii Five-O 12.00pm Classic Coronation Street 12.30 Emmerdale Farm 1.00 Nearest and Dearest 1.30 Agony 2.00 Upstairs Downstairs 3.00 The Love Boat 4.00 The Saint 5.00 Hawaii Five-O 6.00 Emmerdale Farm 6.30 Classic Coronation Street 7.00 Mission: Impossible 8.00 The Love Boat 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 The Comedians 10.00 Jokers Wild 10.30 Hogan's Heroes 11.00 Men and Motors



Kevin Kline (left) stars as a teacher whose sexuality becomes the subject of unwanted scrutiny in *In and Out* (Sky Box Office 4)

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House 6.25 Classic Toons 6.35 Gummi Bears 7.00 Classic Toons 7.10 Aladdin 7.35 101 Dalmatians 8.00 Goof Troop 8.25 Classic Toons 8.45 New Winnie the Pooh 9.00 Adventures of Spot 9.05 Animal Shelf 9.15 Pocket Dragons 9.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 9.55 Toothbrush Family 10.00 Bite Size 10.10 Tots TV 10.30 Big Garage 10.45 PB and J Otter 11.00 Sesame Street 12.00pm Adventures of Spot 12.05 Animal Shelf 12.15 Pocket Dragons 12.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 12.55 Toothbrush Family 1.00 Bite Size 1.10 Tots TV 1.30 Big Garage 1.45 PB and J Otter 2.00 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 2.30 Quack Pack 3.00 Little Mermaid 3.30 Art Attack 4.00 101 Dalmatians 4.30 Hercules: The TV Show 5.00 Recess 5.15 Pepper Ann 5.30 Smart Guy 6.00 Teen Angel 6.30 Boy Meets World 7.00 Honey I Shrunk the Kids - The TV Show 7.50 Classic Toons 8.00 FILM: Bad Baby (1997) 9.20 Classic Toons 9.30 Home Improvement 10.00 Dinosaurs 10.30 Wonder Years 11.00 Dr Quinn: Medicine Woman 12.00am Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Muppet Babies 6.30 Rocko's Modern Life 7.00 CatDog 7.30 Rugrats 8.00 The Wild Thornberrys 8.30 Arthur 9.00 Children's BBC 10.00 Wimzie's House 10.30 Babar 11.00 The Magic School Bus 11.30 PB Bear/Budgie the Little Helicopter/Anima Antics/Family Ness 12.00pm Rugrats 12.30 Blue's Clues 1.00 Bananas in Pyjamas 1.30 Little Bear Stories 2.00 Clangers/King Rollo/Wombles/Bod 2.30 Children's BBC 3.00 Children's BBC 3.30 Pippi Longstocking 4.00 Hey Arnold! 4.30 Rugrats 5.00 Sister Sister 5.30 Kenan and Kel 6.00 Sabrina the Teenage Witch 6.30 Driven Crazy 7.00 Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Power Rangers Turbo 6.30 Power Rangers Turbo 7.00 Mortal Kombat 7.25 Oggy and the Cockroaches 7.30 Donkey Kong Country 8.00 Goosebumps 8.25 Sam and Max 8.35 Spiderman 9.00 X-Men 9.25 Fantastic Four 9.50 The Incredible Hulk 10.05 Casper 10.30 Oggy and the Cockroaches 10.55 The Mouse and the Monster 11.05 Eek!Stravaganza 11.30 Life with Louie 11.55 Home to Rent 12.05pm Sam and Max 12.30 Donkey Kong Country 1.00 Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book 1.25 Ace Ventura 1.50 Spiderman 2.15 X-Men 2.40 Fantastic Four 3.05 The Incredible Hulk 3.30 Roy and Lisa's Big Ride 3.35 Mortal Kombat 4.00 Spiderman 4.25 Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book 4.50 Home to Rent 5.00 Goosebumps 5.25 Eerie Indiana: The Other Dimension 5.50 Oggy and the Cockroaches 5.55 Donkey Kong Country 6.25 Sam and Max 6.50 Eek!Stravaganza 7.00 Close

BRAVO

8.00pm The A-Team 9.00 L.A.P.D. 9.30 Cops 10.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 10.30 Erotic Confessions 11.00 FILM: National Lampoon's Movie Madness (1981) 1.00am Sex Bytes 1.35 Erotic Series 2.05 Extreme Championship Wrestling 2.35 Cops 3.05 FILM: Manhunter (1986) 5.15 Short 5.30 Bushido 6.00 Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Jenny 7.30 Grace Under Fire 8.00 Ellen 8.30 NewsRadio 9.00 Drop the Dead Donkey 9.30 Whose Line Is It Anyway? 10.00 Frasier 10.30 Cheers 11.00 Seinfeld 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show 12.00am Late Night with David Letterman 1.00 Taxi 1.30 The Critic 2.00 Dr Katz 2.30 Tibs and Fibs 3.00 Nightstand 3.30 Abbot and Costello 4.00 Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television 8.00 Sightings 9.00 Buck Rogers in the 25th Century 10.00 Quantum Leap 11.00 Dark Shadows 11.30 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 12.00pm The Twilight Zone 12.30 The Twilight Zone 1.00 Tales of the Unexpected 1.30 Tales of the Unexpected 2.00 Amazing Stories 2.30 Mysteries, Magic and Miracles 3.00 Buck Rogers in the 25th Century 4.00 The Incredible Hulk 5.00 Sightings 6.00 Time Trax 7.00 Quantum Leap 8.00 Mercy Point 9.00 Babylon 5 10.00 FILM: Invader (1995) 11.45 Sci-Focus Special 12.00am New Alfred Hitchcock 12.30 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 1.00 FILM: Falling Fire (1997) 3.00 The Twilight Zone 3.30 Dark Shadows 4.00 Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet 6.30 Graham Kerr 7.00 Room Service 7.30 The Painted House 8.00 Wedding Story 8.30 A Baby Story 9.00 Simply Painting 9.25 The Home and Leisure House 9.30 The Great Garden Game 10.00 Real Gardens 10.30 Cookabout with Greg and Max 11.00 Two's Country Get Stuck In 11.30 Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 12.00pm Our House Down Under 12.30 Antiques Trail 1.00 Our House 1.30 Hometime 2.00 New Yankee Workshop 2.30 Home Again with Bob Vila 3.00 This Old House with Steve and Norm 3.30 Go Fishing

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Specials 4.30 Walker's World 5.00 Wheel Nuts 5.30 Treasure Hunters 6.00 Animal Doctor 6.30 Australian Deserts: An Unnatural Dilemma 7.30 The Elegant Solution 8.00 Discover Magazine 9.00 Science Frontiers 10.00 War and Civilisation 11.00 Forensic Detectives 12.00am High Anxiety 1.00 Treasure Hunters 1.30 Wheel Nuts 2.00 Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00pm Horse Tales 12.30 Going Wild 1.00 Nature Watch with Julian Pettifer 1.30 Crocodile Hunter 2.00 Wildlife ER 2.30 Human/Nature 3.30 Harry's Practice 4.00 Jack Hanna's Zoo Life 4.30 Animal Doctor 5.00 Pet Rescue 5.30 Crocodile Hunter 6.00 The New Adventures of Black Beauty 6.30 Lassie 7.00 Rediscovery of the World: Channel Islands 8.00 Animal Doctor 8.30 Australia Wild: Year of the Gagaudji 9.00 Australia Wild: Spirits of the Forest 9.30 Emergency Vets 10.00 Deadly Australians 10.30 The Big Animal Show 11.00 Wild Rescues 11.30 Emergency Vets 12.00am Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Colony Z 7.30 Delaware Bay Banquet 8.00 Land of the Anaconda 9.00 Extreme Earth: Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes 10.00 On the Edge: Yukonna 10.30 On the Edge: On Hawaii's Giant Wave 11.00 Journey Through the Underworld 11.30 Nuclear Nomads 12.00am Ocean Worlds: Freeze Frame — An Arctic Adventure 12.30 Ocean Worlds: Antarctic Challenge

HISTORY

4.00pm The Civil War: Traitors and Patriots 5.00 Weapons at War: Combat Camera 6.00 Curse of the Goddess Pele 7.00 Biography: Mae West

CARLTON FOOD

9.00am Food Network Daily 9.30 Chef on a Shoestring 10.00 Who's Cooking Dinner? 10.30 Alive and Cooking 11.00 What's Cooking? 11.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 12.00pm Food Network Daily 12.30 Food Factory 1.00 Chef on a Shoestring 1.30 The Green Gourmet 2.00 Tessa Bramley's Country Kitchen 2.30 Food Network Daily 3.00 Scotland's Larder 3.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 4.00 From the Ground Up 4.30 Caribbean Light 5.00 Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew 6.20 Johnson and Friends 6.30 Philbert the Frog 6.40 Tiny Tales 6.45 Greedysaurus and the Gang 6.50 Polka Dot Shorts 7.00 Practical Parenting 7.05 Professor Bubble 7.30 Caillou 7.35 Bug Alert 7.55 Practical Parenting 8.00 Barney and Friends 8.25 Babaloos 8.30 Caillou 8.35 Tiny and Crew 8.50 Practical Parenting 9.00 Can't Cook, Won't Cook 9.30 The Roseanne Show: Highlights 10.00 The Jerry Springer Show 10.50 Maury Povich 11.40 Brookside 12.10pm Animal Rescue 12.40 Rescue 911 1.10 Special Babies 1.40 Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction 2.10 LA Law 3.10 Living Room 4.00 Michael Cole 4.50 Rolonda 5.40 Ready, Steady, Cook 6.15 The Jerry Springer Show 7.05 Rescue 911 7.35 Animal Rescue 8.10 Maury Povich 9.00 FILM: Shooting Elizabeth (1992) 11.00 The Sex Zone 12.00am Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Char Raasta 5.30 Music Time 6.00 Hero Kal Aaj Au 6.30 Awaaz Nayee Andaz Wohi 7.00 Faith, Sai Baba 7.30 News 8.00 Karobari Duniya 8.30 Sailaab 9.00 Zanjeeren 9.30 Zee Health Show 10.00 Hawaain 11.00 Pot Luck 11.30 Parampara 12.00pm FILM: Gujarti Movie: Halo Ne Madi Garba Ramadu 3.00 Zee Bangla 3.30 Public Demand 4.00 Campus 4.30 Fardeal Antakshari 5.30 Daraar 6.00 Pop Time 6.30 Hip Hip Hurray 7.00 Gudgudee 7.30 Cinemagic 8.00 News 8.30 Chahat Aur Nafrat 9.00 Hasratein 9.30 Blunt 2 10.30 Anhonee 11.00 Majuhe Chaand Chahiye 11.30 About You 12.00am News 12.30 Yo hi Hai Zindagi 1.00 Zee Bangla 1.30 Rushes 2.00 FILM: Hindi Movie: Afsana Dil Walon Ka 4.30 An Hour With

مكبر عن الأصل



FOOTBALL 42
How Brady stopped Birmingham from singing the blues

SPORT

RUGBY UNION 45
Yates faces another battle to clear name after stamping claim



Batsmen fail in familiar fashion as Warne spins his web

England waste their chance

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

SYDNEY (Australia won toss): Australia beat England by ten runs

THIS was a game that England should have won, and won well, and they will curse themselves for not doing so. They may point to a couple of run-out decisions, one that went Bevan's way when he was six and a definite run-out that dismissed Hick when he was 42, but that will not wash. Again, Australia found their way out of a stony thicket, this time to win the first match of the best-of-three final to the triangular one-day series.

Their victory came at a cost. Bevan, whose unbeaten 69 pushed the England target to a challenging 233, dislocated the middle finger of his right hand later, trying to catch Stewart, and he will miss the next game in Melbourne. Stuart Law, well-known to English audiences as a brilliant batsman with Essex, was summoned immediately as a replacement.

England suffered their own dislocation, of nerve, and that may prove to be more wounding. They still do not know how to win matches like this, which require clear minds and fretless hands. As they will thank nobody for reminding them. Australia most certainly do. England have now lost five of their past six games. It will take a transformation to come back in Melbourne after the way they lost this one, for there were some tired and galled men in the dressing-room.



CLIVE MASON / ALLSPORT

Warne celebrates taking the wicket of Hussain as the England batsman trudges back to the dressing-room at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday

"I would say that 80 per cent of what we did was good," Alec Stewart, the captain, said, "and the other 20 lost us the game." Stewart was clearly miffed that he was not there to win it, for he stood his ground when Mark Waugh claimed a catch at short mid-wicket and was reluctant to leave the crease. It was an important wicket. He had just clobbered McGrath for four consecutive fours, the second of which sent Bevan scurrying from the field, and his dander was up.

Without their captain, England still progressed. Eight overs from the end, it was going swimmingly. Hussain and Wells had added 67, to bring the demand down to 35, and Wells had just swept Lehmann for a mighty six. With half a dozen wickets in hand, they were in the stronger position. They simply had to win to show Australia how they had mended their ways after losing two games last week on this ground.

It took Warne all of two balls to compose another cautionary tale. Hussain, charging, was stumped, his head in the clouds. Next ball, Hollioake was given out leg-before on the sweep. It was not a good decision by the umpire, but, as he had kept his finger down earlier when Warne struck Hussain on the back leg, it was at least a compensatory one.

Hollioake dragged himself from the field, his face looking longer than a day without breakfast. He had granted Gilchrist a life in Mullally's first over and now he had played a stroke to his first ball that was not appropriate to the occasion.

"They were playing well and lost a couple of wickets to bad shots," Warne said later, rather like a man who has seen them do it before and expects to see it again.

For all his 58 runs, Hussain lost his battle of wills with the Australia captain. Words were exchanged, as they often are, and Hussain allowed the wrist spinner's darts to hurt him. Warne treated it all as a joke and enjoyed the last laugh. "I was trying to get up his nose a little bit," he admitted.

For Hussain, there is the awkward truth that every time he takes the field at present, every time he plays a shot, he appears to play himself farther away from a regular place in the World Cup side. He was also complicit in the dismissal of Hick, who was thrown out directly from cover by Ponting after Hussain pushed, called and stalled.

Wells deserved better than defeat. After taking three good wickets and then batting sensibly for 33, he whacked Lee's slower ball straight down the ground to see Julian run 30 yards from long off and hold a fine catch. When McGrath returned, he had Ealham caught behind and, two balls later, hit Gough's off stump with a beauty that swung in late. Five wickets had fallen for six runs. It was a capitulation.

McGrath's 25th wicket of the series, which put him alongside Lillee, the only man previously to hit the 25 mark, came in the last over, when Mullally heaved, as the situation demanded, and lost. It was not his fault. The middle-order batsmen had again failed the bowlers and, with the World Cup three months away, there is not much time to find people who will put matters right.

Once more, Bevan was the man with a steady hand on the tiller when the Aussie clipper entered choppy waters. The third umpire gave him the benefit of the doubt early in his innings, when Hussain thought that his throw had beaten him home, and, after that reprieve, he settled down to what he enjoys most — pushing, prodding, nudging, nurdling, with his bottom hand occasionally supplying a four-hit to leg.

Wells has made the most of his chance, improbable as his name appears on the scorecard. All the more reason to commend him, therefore. He succeeded splendidly here by cutting off Ponting, Waugh and Lehmann before they could get away. Those are wickets to claim with pride and his ten overs cost just 30.

Ealham also took three wickets and Gough chipped in with a pair. So, when they kept Australia down to 232 for eight and then came within two runs of 200 in the reply, with six wickets up their sleeves, it had become the game they could not lose. But they did. One by one, they frittered it away, for the addition of a mere 24. Dear, oh dear, oh dear. What words can a shattered captain find to explain such a calamity?

SCOREBOARD FROM SYDNEY

Australia won toss

AUSTRALIA

M E Waugh c Stewart b Wells ..... 42 (56 balls, 3 fours)
† A C Gilchrist b Gough ..... 29 (30 balls, 3 fours)
R T Ponting c Stewart b Wells ..... 10 (14 balls)
D S Lehmann c Mullally b Wells ..... 19 (33 balls, 1 four)
D R Martyn c Stewart b Ealham ..... 21 (38 balls, 1 six)
M G Bevan not out ..... 69 (74 balls, 6 fours)
S Lee c Fairbrother b Ealham ..... 12 (27 balls)
B P Julian c sub (B C Hollioake) b Ealham ..... 12 (13 balls, 1 four)
*S K Warne b Gough ..... 9 ([illegible])
A C Dale not out ..... 1 ([illegible])
Extras ([illegible]) 8
Total (8 wkts, 50 overs, 217min) 232
G D McGrath did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-45 (Waugh 10), 2-57 (Waugh 25), 3-98 (Lehmann 15), 4-115 (Waugh 42), 5-135 (Bevan 16), 6-175 (Bevan 38), 7-199 (Bevan 49), 8-222 (Bevan 62).

BOWLING: Gough 10-0-43-2 ([illegible]). **Mullally 7-0-42-0** ([illegible]). **Wells 10-2-30-3** ([illegible]). **Ealham 10-0-45-3** ([illegible]). **Croft 5-1-29-0** ([illegible]). **Hollioake 8-0-38-0** (1 four; one spell).

Score after 15 overs: 73 for 2

ENGLAND

N V Knight b Dale ..... 22 ([illegible])
*† A J Stewart c Waugh b Dale ..... 27 ([illegible], 4 fours)
G A Hick run out (Ponting) ..... 42 (58 balls, 2 fours)
N Hussain st Gilchrist b Warne ..... 58 (98 balls, 4 fours)
N H Fairbrother c Gilchrist b McGrath ..... 8 (12 balls)
V J Wells c Julian b Lee ..... 33 (39 balls, 1 six, 3 fours)
A J Hollioake lbw b Warne ..... 0 (1 ball)
M A Ealham c Gilchrist b McGrath ..... 4 (14 balls)
R D B Croft not out ..... 12 (12 balls, 1 four)
D Gough b McGrath ..... 0 (2 balls)
A D Mullally b McGrath ..... 7 (11 balls, 1 four)
Extras (lb 3, w 2, nb 4) 9
Total (49.2 overs, 225min) 222

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-34 (Knight 7), 2-67 (Hick 18), 3-114 (Hussain 21), 4-131 (Hussain 27), 5-198 (Wells 33), 6-198 (Wells 33), 7-198 (Ealham 0), 8-204 (Croft 2), 9-204 (Croft 2)

BOWLING: McGrath 9.2-1-45-4 (nb 1, 7 fours; 5-1-33-0, 2-0-6-1, 2.2-0-6-3). **Dale 10-0-33-2** (1 six; one spell). **Lee 7-1-29-1** (w 1, 3 fours; 2-0-9-0, 2-1-6-0, 1-0-3-1, 2-0-11-0). **Warne 10-0-40-2** (nb 1, 3 fours; 4-0-15-0, 4-0-20-0, 2-0-5-2). **Julian 4-0-28-0** (nb 2, w 1, 1 four; one spell). **Martyn 6-0-27-0** (3 fours; 2-0-7-0, 4-0-20-0). **Lehmann 3-0-17-0** (1 six; one spell)

Score after 15 overs: 69 for 2

Australia won by 10 runs

Match award: M G Bevan

Umpires: S J Davis and D B Hair. **Third umpire:** S J Taufel. **Referee:** P L van der Merwe (South Africa)

FINALS TO COME: Feb 12 (Melbourne), Feb 14 (Melbourne, if required)

□ Compiled by Bill Frindall

LINKS

WEBSITE: www.uk.cricket.org/ □ The Times one-day series hotline, 0891 881 461. Reports, updates and commentary. Calls cost 50p per minute.

MCC defines acceptable face of cricket

Ivo Tennant on an initiative to crack down on bad behaviour

For the first time since the Laws of Cricket were devised by MCC in 1788, a definition of the spirit of the game has been drawn up to be inserted for the benefit of all captains and players. The intention is that this can be brandished in front of anybody that umpires and match referees feel is indulging in gamesmanship or bad behaviour on the field. It will assist administrators in meting out punishments.

MCC still has responsibility for the Laws of Cricket and will be including its views on the spirit of the game as a preamble. At present, Law 42 refers to unfair play and the conduct of players, but does not spell out that an individual should have respect for his opponents, his captain and team and traditional values.

The Spirit of Cricket, as this insertion will be known, has been approved by the MCC cricket committee, chaired by Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge, and by a Laws rewrite working party under Lord Griffiths of Govilon, a former president of the club.

> 'It is sad this has happened but the Laws need tightening'

It has been drawn up at the behest of Cowdrey, who for some years has been concerned about declining standards of behaviour, the most recent case of which involved Arjuna Ranatunga, the Sri Lanka captain, during the one-day tournament in Australia. Ted Dexter, another former England captain, has had a considerable input.

John Jameson, an assistant secretary of MCC, who is overseeing the revising of the entire Laws for 2000, said yesterday: "This will make captains aware that they have a duty to the game and need to conduct themselves in a proper manner. It is sad that this has had to happen, but in a lot of cases the Laws are a little bit loose and need tightening up."

The Spirit of Cricket states that there is no place for "any act of violence; disputing an umpire's decision by word, action or gesture; directing abusive language towards an opponent or umpire; indulging in cheating or any sharp practice such as appealing when knowing the batsman is not out; advancing towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing; seeking to distract an opponent either verbally or by harassment with persistent clapping or unnecessary noise under guise of enthusiasm and motivation of one's own side".

Law 42, as it exists, highlights the responsibility of the captains, but has often not been properly enforced over the past two decades. MCC will hope that umpires and match referees should now be able to uphold it more rigorously. "For former cricketers, the spirit of the game was, for the most part, accepted without question and umpires generally knew who was likely to test the system," Roger Knight, the MCC secretary, said.

"Now, there are different views on this unwritten code of conduct, which is not surprising as attitudes, and what is acceptable, have changed in the eyes of the world. The first decision for the working party was whether umpires should be given a red or yellow card. The point was made that the Laws were written for cricketers at every level. In many instances the umpire may be the No 11 of the batting team."

The Spirit of Cricket, which will be presented to MCC members for their approval at the club's annual meeting in May 2000, emphasises that "any action which is seen to abuse this causes injury to the game itself". It is based, MCC stated, "on the notion of fairness", a way, perhaps, of countering the old cliché "it's not cricket".

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1638

ACROSS
4 Animal enclosure (3)
8 One stockpiling (7)
9 Realms, domains (5)
10 The study of number, etc (5)
11 Funeral procession (7)
12 One hiding aboard (8)
14 (US) school dance; (UK) concert (4)
15 Frustrate; thin metal sheet (4)
16 One insisting on (eg accuracy) (8)
20 Version (of paper, book) (7)
21 Desert beast of burden (5)
23 Titan (5)
24 Ten-year-siege victims; Berlioz subjects (7)
25 First woman (3)

DOWN
1 River at Henley (6)
2 Skin growth, may be charmed off (4)
3 Black Sea port; its *File*, Forsyth (6)
4 Put off till later (13)
5 Mother-of-pearl (5)
6 Intellectual (not emotional) (8)
7 Warm regard (6)
13 Newly devised; unchanged (8)
15 Acquire feathers (6)
17 Pupa's protection (6)
18 Thoroughly enjoy (6)
19 Skiing track (5)
22 Flesh; sounds like *come across* (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1637
ACROSS: 1 Swarthy 5 Vale 8 Beggar 9 Allure 10 Frequent 12 Swag 13 Pas de deux 17 Parr 18 Magazine 20 Skates 21 Arbour 23 Bloc 24 Feigned
DOWN: 2 Wherry 3 Rag 4 Horde 5 Velasquez 6 Larvae 7 Batted 11 Quadratic 14 Damask 15 Jackal 16 Injure 19 Grate 22 Bug

Rusedski fails his Spanish test

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN DUBAI

THEY shoot horses, don't they? It is almost a pity they cannot do the same for tennis players. Any animal who had been put through the torture that Greg Rusedski endured yesterday at the Dubai Open would have been taken to one side and put out of its misery. Unfortunately for Rusedski, he had to suffer two hours of misery as he devised his own downfall and limped out of the tournament 3-6, 7-5, 6-2 to Francisco Clavet.

It was a performance of unbelievable incompetence, where even the simplest of tasks seemed to be beyond him. Afterwards, he could not bring himself to speak about his efforts until the anger and frustration had subsided.

At first glance, Clavet does not appear to be a hard-nosed athletic competitor; rather, he looks as if he was once given a pair of shorts and a racket and so decided on a life in tennis. However, most people, on being presented with a pair of shorts like the ones he wore yesterday — green, baggy and large enough to house a small army — would opt for a career in something else, accountancy perhaps.

No matter, despite approaching his 30th birthday, the Spaniard climbed his way up the rankings to break back into the top 30 last year and he had disposed of Wayne Ferreira in a bad-tempered affair in the previous round. It may not be the greatest of records, but it was enough to make Rusedski twitch.

The Briton was having one of those days when everything that he touched turned to dust. He had the match in his pocket after half an hour, having taken the first set and a 3-0 lead in the second with two breaks of service. It was just a matter of time, surely, before he took his appointed place in the quarterfinals. However, with a first service that was faltering at best and a backhand that was becoming a liability, Rusedski began to self-destruct.

He had begun brightly enough. True, the service was not at its best, but the forehand was doing some damage. Unfortunately, it is rather difficult to win matches with only one shot, especially when that begins to wilt at the most inopportune of moments. In short, Rusedski could not have played any worse if he had tried.

Even when it appeared that he could not get it wrong, that luck was on his side, he managed to make a mess of things. It was not as if Clavet fought back to level the scores at 3-3 in the second set — all he had to do was keep the ball in play and wait for Rusedski to crumble.

Breaking again to edge into the lead, Rusedski was presented with good fortune by the bucket-load with a series of net cords, only for him to blow away his own service with a brace of double faults.

With Alex Corretja, the No 1 seed, already gone and Albert Costa, the No 6 seed, in hot pursuit after his loss to Nicolas Kiefer, Carlos Moyá finally stopped the stampede of top-ranked Spaniards heading for the airport. He set up a quarter-final appointment with Felix Mantilla, his compatriot, after a hard-fought 6-4, 6-4 win over Thomas Muster.

Then again, any victory over Muster, the big-hitting Austrian, involves a lot of hard graft and if sweat and muscle alone could win tournaments, he would be a very happy man. Unfortunately, at 31, staying at the top of the tennis tree is not quite as easy as it used to be.

Muster is a chap who writes right-handed but plays left-handed and Moyá is a fellow who writes left-handed but plays right-handed. Despite the confusion, the two French Open champions eventually sorted out who was who and what was what as Muster's tendency to bludgeon the ball wide and long finally caught up with him.

Rusedski failed to produce the form that would have ensured his progress in the Dubai Open yesterday